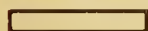




DULCY



A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS



GEORGE S. KAUFMAN AND MARC CONNELLY



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DULCY



To
LYNA FONTANNE
Meyna A. A. A.

DULCY

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

GEORGE S. KATZMAN

AND

MARC CONNELLY

(With a Bow to Franklin P. Adams)

INTRODUCTION

BY

BOOTH TARKINGTON

FRONTISPIECE BY

NEYSA McMEIN

DULCY

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G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press

1921

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by
George S. Kaufman
and
Marc Connelly

Made in the United States of America



All dramatic rights to *Dulcy* are controlled by George C. Tyler, New Amsterdam Theatre Building, New York City. It may not be acted, either by professional or amateur companies, without permission and the payment of royalty.

Produced by George C. Tyler and H. H. Frazee, at the Cort Theatre, Chicago, Feb. 20, 1921, with the following cast:

DULCINEA	<i>Lynn Fontanne</i>
GORDON SMITH, her Husband.....	<i>John Westley</i>
WILLIAM PARKER, her Brother....	<i>Gregory Kelly</i>
C. ROGER FORBES	<i>Wallis Clark</i>
MRS. FORBES.....	<i>Constance Pelissier</i>
ANGELA FORBES	<i>Norma Lee</i>
SCHUYLER VAN DYCK.....	<i>Gilbert Douglas</i>
TOM STERRETT, Advertising Engineer	<i>Elliott Nugent</i>
VINCENT LEACH, Scenarist....	<i>Howard Lindsay</i>
BLAIR PATTERSON.....	<i>George Alison</i>
HENRY.....	<i>Harry Lillford</i>

Produced at the Frazee Theatre, New York, August 13, 1921, with the same cast.

A PROLOGUE

ONE day the finest critic in England, though not the best, wrote of a contemporary comedy just produced upon the stage: "There was a new play last night, which succeeded prodigiously . . . you laugh very much, yet it is a wretched comedy. The Muse stoops indeed; she is draggled up to the knees, and has trudged, I believe, from Southwark fair. The whole view of the piece is low humor, and no humor is in it. The heroine has no more merit than Lady Bridget, and the author's wit is as much *manqué* as the lady's, but some of the characters are well acted. . . . A Comedy—no, it is the lowest of all farces. It is not the subject I condemn, though very vulgar, but the execution. The drift tends toward no moral, no edification of any kind. The situations, however, are well imagined, and make one laugh in spite of the grossness of the dialogue, the forced witticisms and total improbability of the whole plan and conduct. But what disgusts me most is, that though the characters are very low, and aim at low humor, not one of them says a sentence that is natural or marks any character at all. It is set up in opposition to sentimental comedy and is as bad as the worst of them."

A PROLOGUE

Here is a familiar ring; no playwright who goes often to New York will find the tintinnabulation altogether strange to his ear, and all of our playwrights must go there to get for their work an opinion that the rest of the country will later mistake for its own. No, the Master of Strawberry, coming to Arlington Street in Town, and venturing to the theatre in spite of his age, high taste and the gout, was but following an everlasting fashion when he thus sat upon "that silly Dr. Goldsmith" and the Doctor's new Comedy. It happened to be "She Stoops to Conquer," this "lowest of all farces," not a Comedy at all, according to Mr. Walpole, who died only some twenty-four or twenty-five years after that First Night; not living long enough, of course, to alter his unfavorable opinion. For if there be, indeed, any everlasting fashion, it is the fashion of taking a slighting view of a contemporary;—a fashion even more indestructible than the other fashion complementary to it, which is the fashion of taking a ponderously reverential view of ancient performers no longer rivals to the unconsciously jealous living. If "silly Dr. Goldsmith" had written "She Stoops to Conquer" seventy years sooner than he did that low farce might have borne a pleasanter flavor to Mr. Walpole, who in his old age asked people to remember that he had "known Pope and lived with Gray." He liked Gray better,

A PROLOGUE

and had a much higher opinion of Gray's work, when Gray was dead.

Approaching our point with leisurely effrontery, we have spoken of "She Stoops to Conquer," and now hasten to speak of "Dulcy" in the same breath. The latter is the better comedy, if truer is better, but such a comparison, taking no account of history, is obviously unfair to the old monument. "She Stoops to Conquer" opened a sparkling vista in advance of its own day; it was a comedy more important for its day than "Dulcy" is for ours; but let us follow Mr. Walpole's everlasting precedent no further than to make this admission.

A third perpetual fashion, since we have mentioned two, is the fashion of believing that "the public's taste is low," and there is no doubt that this fashion is sound if we mean really everybody when we say "the public" and if we mean choice in manifestations of art when we say "taste." The men who control the "moving picture industry" are intelligent: that is to say they "know their business"; they know it better than do we who laugh at almost all of their films except the comic ones; and they know the taste of a public so vast as to be at least a fifth of really everybody. They have tested that taste ingeniously and with expensive thoroughness, and, being neither goats of sacrifice nor artist swilling to starve in the dark,

A PROLOGUE

they gorge this ascertained taste over and over endlessly, with the unvarying sickly flow of rancid molasses that it craves. Every now and then they try to please it with something better, but at such times they usually hear a rebellious murmuring, and abandon philanthropy.

The theatre has a smaller public, of course; a public with better powers of selection. In the theatre a play that asks for intelligence in its audience is not at all certain to fail, though it may always be considered something of a venture, and, as we know, it will never compete in money profit with the great shows of women and dancers and low-comedians. Nor must we expect it to "do" as well on "Broadway" (and consequently, it appears, in Hartford and Cincinnati) as the plays that are correctly called "sensational successes" because they strike at the sensations of ordinary audiences. However, the "intelligent play" has a number of pleasant privileges: there is an audience for it if the two (the play and its audience) can be somehow got together, a matter of more difficulty than might be guessed; and although this audience, being the best of publics, is comparatively a rather small one, the play may live with some show of bright prosperity for as much as two or three seasons at a stretch, and afterward be produced by stock companies and amateurs indefinitely: it may be "revived";

A PROLOGUE

and it may be printed as a book. At the best, it has even a chance to be a little known by another generation.

"Dulcy" was "produced for the first time on any stage" in Indianapolis, one evening in the early part of the year 1921, and many of the audience came upon invitation; they were people fatigued by most of the plays they had seen during several years, and of course they were doubtful of this one because it invited them. Their growing animation as the comedy began to glitter before them was enlivening to see. Here was a play that dealt in "character"; it outlined and colored, with the gayest satiric touch, sketches of actual beings happily recognizable as human, not theatric; and, depending upon only one or two of the slightest devices of "plot," and upon these merely for a little enhancing of gayety, this priceless contrivance went on developing itself into the rarest thing, a merriment for the mind. But, what was even more astonishing, it brought upon the stage "types" not taken from other plays or from novels: it enriched the stage with unused people.

Among my acquaintances is a coast fish-dealer who "writes movies." By preference he writes maritime romances about village beauties and seafaring fishermen; and as he buys his fish intimately of ocean fishermen, he

A PROLOGUE

should know what he is writing about. Not at all: the seafaring people of his sketches are all unconsciously purloined seafarers he has seen in the "movies": never once has he made one that was his own or one that was like a human being. Nor is he singular: his way is the ordinary way of the trade and similar trades. As "movies" are made of previous "movies" or of previous novels and stories and plays, so are most novels and stories and plays made of previous novels and stories and plays. Almost all of the "great popular successes" are not only assembled, but assembled of used material: made of used "character," and done in a used manner. The public eye is innocent, does not detect much; it does not know which are the assembled novels and plays nearly so well as it knows which are the assembled motor cars. In fact, the public does not care which are the assembled novels and plays; and nearly always it likes and praises novels and plays assembled of used parts, much more readily and heartily than it likes novels and plays of original genius. The greater part of the "public" that likes and praises "Dulcy" has no idea how "*really* good" the comedy is, nor why it is so good.

It is one of those pieces inevitably spoken of by the gracious and pretentious as "little" plays. There is no "sex" in it, no "surge of passion," no approach of death, no "conflict of

A PROLOGUE

big primal forces"; there is nothing in it imitated from the Russian, nor even from the Russian imitation of the French; moreover there is no author-person gesturing in any phrase of it: never does ink splatter in a word spoken by one of its people. It is just a brilliantly expressed gay thought about some kinds of human foolishness, and since a gay thought about anything can be as true as a gloomy thought about the same thing, and since the gay thought is worth ten times as much as the gloomy one, and is incredibly more difficult to express as this play does, nothing could have been more certain from the outset than that "Dulcy" would generally be called a "clever little play," or a "sparkling little play," but almost always "little."

It takes so many years to learn how to write a little play—truthful, merry and compact, as clean of "red-meat" and common market-stall viscera as of ancient ink smears—and so much patient destructiveness on the part of a few helpful, fallible critics has been needed to make intelligent comedies possible for managers to produce, that the diminutiveness of the few little plays of this new type brings to mind the diminutiveness of fine jewelry. For there never was a pearl so big as a hen's egg. Even a bad egg is bigger than the largest pearl.

BOOTH TARKINGTON.

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Photographs by courtesy of White Studio

DULCY

DULCY

ACT I

The scene is the living-room in the suburban home of DULCINEA and her husband—in Westchester County, within commuting distance of New York. It is a room that is splashing rather than merely striking. The furniture, for no particular reason, is old Italian, but most of it is hidden beneath beautiful and variously colored batiks and drapes. Over the divan, for example, is a golden brocade, and on it three blue pillows. Across the grand piano is a red drape, and on it a blue book. The window curtains are also of blue; there are two or three striking lamps in the background, and the tinted walls are covered here and there by a couple of good-looking tapestries. There are no pictures. On a platform at the rear, where the stairs begin to ascend, stands a great blue urn, filled with hydrangeas. On a cabinet at one side is an iridescent bowl containing tea roses; at each side of the cabinet stands a floor candlestick of Italian design. In a word, the room is DULCY. If there were a telephone DULCY would have it covered with a cute little doll—but there is no telephone.

In addition to the stairs there are three means of exit—at the rear are French windows which open onto the lawn and DULCY's

DULCY

cherished garden; at the right is a door that leads to the interior of the house, and at the left another that leads to the hallway and the outer door.

The time is five o'clock on a Friday afternoon in late summer. The French windows are closed, subduing somewhat the light in the room. The rising curtain reveals WILLIAM PARKER, DULCY'S brother, stretched out in an easy chair, reading a magazine. After a moment HENRY, the butler, enters. He goes up to the windows, opens them, and comes back to BILL.

HENRY.

Mr. Smith has just come in, sir.

BILL.

[After a pause, not looking up from his magazine.]

Yeh?

HENRY

Yes, sir.

BILL

[Suddenly looking up from his magazine, stopping Henry as he reaches the door.]

My sister with him?

HENRY.

Oh, no, sir! Mrs. Smith is at her Friday afternoon club, over at Mrs. Kennedy's.

[Bill returns to his magazine.]

[Henry picks up a magazine from the floor and replaces it on the table.]

DULCY

BILL.

[*Getting to his feet and handing magazine back to Henry.*]

What time's dinner?

HENRY.

[*Hesitates.*]

Seven-fifty, sir.

BILL.

Seven-fifty? My God!

HENRY.

Yes, sir.

BILL.

Oh—James!

HENRY.

Henry, sir.

BILL.

Henry?

HENRY.

[*Going to Bill.*]

Yes, sir.

BILL.

Henry. (*He pauses.*) Who else is coming to this—week-end? I mean, besides Mr. Forbes, and—ah—his wife and daughter?

HENRY.

I'm not certain, sir. I've rooms ready for a number, sir.

DULCY

BILL.

M'm. Well——

[Enter GORDON SMITH, DULCINEA'S husband. He is an alert young business man, with worry just beginning to set on his shoulders.]

GORDON.

[As he enters.]

Good evening, Bill. You're early.

HENRY.

[Turning away from BILL.]

Yes, sir.

BILL.

Hello, Gordon.

[BILL goes upstage and lights a cigarette. HENRY exits; GORDON'S eyes follow him as he goes out.]

GORDON

[Looks around, yawns, stretches.]

Been here long?

BILL.

Oh, not so very. It was sort of dull in town, so I thought I'd come out early.

GORDON.

Of course—glad you did.

[He takes another moment to stretch, then drops into sofa.]

Tired tonight.

DULCY

BILL.

[*Observing a folded newspaper in GORDON'S pocket as he sits.*]

What's that—the *Sun*?

GORDON.

No—*Post*.

[*He hands him the paper—BILL drops into a chair with it. There is a considerable pause while Bill reads and GORDON indulges in another yawn.*]

Dulcy not home yet, huh?

BILL.

[*Reading the paper at the same time.*]

No. She's—across the street—some place. Mrs. Kennedy's, I think.

GORDON.

Oh, yes. It's a—Friday afternoon thingmajig.

BILL.

[*Still with the paper.*]

M'm.

GORDON.

[*Another pause; Smith musters up some energy.*]

Well! How's business?

BILL.

[*Puts down the paper and looks at him.*]

What?

DULCY

GORDON.

I say, how's business?

BILL.

[*As though announcing a death.*]

Haven't you heard?

GORDON.

[*A bit cheerily.*]

Oh, I don't know—I have an idea it may be picking up presently.

BILL.

[*Tapping the newspaper.*]

You've been reading Mr. Schwab. (*He quotes.*) "Steel Man Sees Era of Prosperity."

GORDON.

Well—I think he's right at that.

BILL.

Yes.

[*A pause.*]

Rockefeller expects to break even this year, too.

GORDON.

Just the same, I look for an improvement.

[*Earnestly.*]

Bill, if it could just be arranged that all the outstanding accounts could be absorbed by the banks, and then turn those into accounts payable——

DULCY

BILL.

[Interrupting.]

I know. You mean—things would be better if we weren't all broke.

GORDON

That's one of the things that holds us back—pessimism.

BILL.

How's the artificial jewelry business? If any?

GORDON.

Well, it's—looking up a bit.

BILL.

Anything new on Forbes' merger?

GORDON

It's coming along. It's practically settled, I think, that I'm to go in with him.

BILL.

That's great. I hadn't said anything, but I rather felt that you were up against it, when I saw you last week.

GORDON.

Thanks, old man. I—was, a bit.

BILL.

You'll be all right if this deal goes through?

GORDON.

I think so. It will end this fighting among us smaller men.

DULCY

BILL.

How many of you are going into this pool?

GORDON.

About half the trade. I'm to get sixteen and two-thirds per cent of the stock of the combine.

BILL.

Just for the factory?

GORDON.

[*Unwillingly.*]

Well, the plant *and* the pearl formula.

BILL.

Oh, I see.

GORDON.

[*Justifying himself.*]

Of course, that means a cash payment when the papers are signed, and that will just about see me through.

BILL.

You think that's enough—sixteen and two-thirds? Those pearls of yours are pretty good, you know, even if they *are* imitations.

GORDON.

I know—but I'm up against it. I've got to take what he gives me, or have that crowd to fight. Forbes is a tough customer.

BILL.

That's hard luck.

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Doubtfully.*]

Of course, I *may* be able to do something with him over the week-end.

BILL.

Huh?

GORDON.

He's coming out here, you know.

BILL.

So I understand.

GORDON.

[*Looks at his watch.*]

They're driving up from town.

BILL.

Uh-huh. (*Thoughtfully.*) Bringing his wife and—daughter, too, isn't he?

GORDON.

Yes. They're going to stay over Sunday.

BILL.

I didn't know you knew them that well.

GORDON.

Well, I don't—except Forbes—in a business way. (*He pauses.*) I wasn't keen for it.

BILL.

Well, then——

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Rises.*]

Well, Dulcy thought it would be nice to have them out here, and—well——

BILL.

[*As GORDON pauses.*]

Yes, I know.

[*There is a pause.*]

Does he play Russian bank?

[*Henry enters with the afternoon papers, which he puts on the table. GORDON watches him narrowly, and believes that he detects HENRY looking furtively at him. Henry exits again*]

GORDON.

[*Paying no attention to Bill's question.*]

Did you notice that?

BILL

What?

GORDON.

The way he looked at me.

BILL.

[*Lightly.*]

Henry?

GORDON.

Didn't Dulcy tell you?

BILL.

She's over at Mrs. Kennedy's.

DULCY

GORDON

Well—he's an escaped convict!

BILL.

[*Rises.*]

He's—what?

GORDON.

No—I don't think that's just what I mean. It's a—suspended sentence. Dulcy got him off by—*you* know. Promised to take care of him, and give him work, and——

BILL.

What's his line?

GORDON.

He's a—butler.

BILL.

What *was* his line?

GORDON.

Oh! He—wrote a little check or something.

BILL.

And the judge turned him over to Dulcy?

GORDON.

After she made about twenty trips to town, and exhausted the judge, and used up about a hundred dollars' worth of my lawyer, and——

BILL

She does things right.

DULCY

GORDON.

Oh, well, I suppose it's all right. After all, there *was* some doubt about him. Dulcy went to see his wife and family, and—she felt pretty badly over it——

[*Door bell rings.*]

GORDON.

Here they are!

BILL.

The Forbeses?

GORDON.

Yes.

BILL.

Better send them over to Mrs. Kennedy's, so that Dulcy can receive them.

GORDON.

Darn it!—the man coming *here*, with a business deal on. I don't like it!

[*Enter HENRY.*]

It looks too much as if I were trying to——

BILL.

Oh, I don't know.

[*HENRY crosses behind GORDON and below BILL, and exits, closing door behind him. BILL watches him off.*]

Are you always sure he's coming back?

GORDON.

I don't like mixing business with social affairs.

DULCY

BILL.

[*Solemnly.*]

Why don't you make Dulcy lay off?

GORDON.

Why don't I? How *can* I?

BILL.

[*After considering it.*]

I never thought of that.

[*Enter HENRY.*]

HENRY.

It's a Mr. —

[*Enter TOM STERRETT, a very much alive young man. He is the kind of man who pulls weights in his bedroom every morning, and who feels that a vigorous good health is the first aid toward business success. His business is advertising. He could tell you hundreds of interesting facts about type psychology, direct sales drives and national conferences; and would, if you gave him half a chance. He believes in Presence and knows he has it.*)]

STERRETT.

[*Brushing past Henry with an Open, Sesame! smile.*]

I beg your pardon! I'm Mr. Sterrett!

BILL.

[*First looking at Gordon to see if he knows him; sees he does not.*]

That's fine.

DULCY

GORDON.

You're looking for—Smiths?

[HENRY closes the door, crosses, and exits.]

STERRETT.

Yes, sir. I'm expected to meet Mr. Forbes here. Your man says——

GORDON.

[*A bit more cordial.*]

Oh! Mr. Forbes hasn't arrived yet—I'm expecting him very soon.

[*Extending hand.*]

I am Mr. Smith.

STERRETT.

[*Inflicting a brisk hand-shake.*]

Smith Pearls?

GORDON.

Ah—yes.

STERRETT.

I follow your campaigns. Your advertising.

GORDON.

This is Mr. Parker, my brother-in-law.

STERRETT.

How are you, sir!

[*Shaking his hand vigorously.*]

Didn't I meet you at the A. C. A. Convention?—in Detroit last summer?

DULCY

[Renewing the hand-shake with the explanation.]

Advertising Clubs of America?

BILL.

[Returning the shake with interest.]

I'm afraid not.

STERRETT.

[Very quickly.]

Sorry, my mistake.

BILL.

[Adopting Sterrett's snappy style.]

It's all right! Have a cigarette!

[He whips out case.]

STERRETT.

[Accepting one and glancing at it.]

Ah! C & G! Thanks!

[Takes chair, sits and lights cigarette.]

GORDON.

[Knowingly saying the unnecessary.]

Won't you—wait?

STERRETT.

Surely. Mr. Forbes left word at his office for me to meet him here. It's about some contracts that have to be——

GORDON.

[Somewhat more cordially.]

Oh, I see. You're in the Forbes organization?

DULCY

STERRETT.

[*With a trace of reproof.*]

Oh, no! I handle Mr. Forbes' advertising.
S. S. Q. & L. Agency.

BILL.

[*Airily.*]

Oh, the S. S. U. & L!

STERRETT.

[*Correcting him.*]

S. S. Q. & L. Simpson, Simpson, Querrida
and Lawford.

BILL.

That's fine.

STERRETT.

[*Hitching his chair towards Smith.*]

Have you followed our Forbes copy, Mr.
Smith?

GORDON.

Well—to a degree—yes.

STERRETT.

[*A bit disappointed in GORDON. To*
BILL.]

You're interested in advertising, Mr. Parker?

BILL.

I buy the *Saturday Evening Post*.

STERRETT.

But speaking generally of the other media—

DULCY

BILL.

I'm afraid I don't know much about advertising. In fact I've never *been* in Detroit.

STERRETT.

[*Answering without thinking.*]

Well, that's too bad.

[*Realizing he hasn't understood.*]

Huh?

[*Thinking he understands.*]

Oh, yes—great town! Town that's made itself through advertising!

[*He consults watch.*]

What time do you expect—ah—Mr. ——

GORDON.

Mr. Forbes and his family will be here presently.

STERRETT.

Oh, is Mr. Forbes' family coming?

GORDON.

Yes, they're going to spend the week-end.

STERRETT.

Mr. and Mrs. Forbes?

GORDON.

Yes.

STERRETT.

And Miss Forbes?

DULCY

GORDON.

Yes.

BILL.

Are you a friend of the—family's?

STERRETT.

Oh, yes! (*A pause.*) Yes, indeed!

BILL.

[*Giving GORDON a significant look.*]

H'm.

STERRETT.

What was that?

BILL.

I didn't say anything.

STERRETT.

Oh, beg pardon, I'm sure.

GORDON.

Well—ah——

[*He is saying what seems to be expected of him.*]

You must stay for dinner, Mr. Sterrett.

STERRETT.

Many thanks. If I won't be——

GORDON.

[*A bit curtly.*]

That's splendid.

DULCY

BILL.

Yes—that's fine. We generally need one more for Dulcy's parlor games, don't we?

STERRETT.

Now, I want to be sure I'm not intruding.

GORDON.

Not at all. We're only too glad to have you.

[DULCINEA enters through the French window. She is dressed in a gown that is just a bit too much for an afternoon gathering; she carries an armful of flowers, and she is in her customary bubbling good humor.]

DULCY.

Hello, everybody!

BILL.

Hello, Dulcy.

DULCY.

M'm! It's nice and cool in here, isn't it? You know, if there is any breeze going at all, we get it in this room. Don't we, Gordon, darling?

[She kisses him.]

Did you have a good day at the office? Send for Henry to fix these, will you?

[She indicates the flowers.]

Aren't they pretty—right out of my own garden.]

[BILL, who has gone around the piano, comes down to her.]

DULCY

Hello, Willie.

[Kisses him.]

Whom have you been doing? Eh?

[She laughs loudly at her own joke.]

GORDON.

Dulcy, this is Mr. Sterrett. My wife.

DULCY.

Oh, how do you do?

[Shaking hands somewhat appraisingly.]

STERRETT.

[With great assurance.]

How do you do!

DULCY.

[Trying to estimate STERRETT'S position in the scheme of things.]

Have you been over the grounds? Gordon, you must show Mr. Sterrett over the grounds.

GORDON.

Mr. Sterrett is a friend of the Forbeses.

DULCY.

[As this explains STERRETT to her.]

Oh, the Forbeses—really! Oh, that is nice!

[Then with a bit of panic.]

Have they come? Where are they? Why didn't you tell me!

[She rushes up toward staircase, then toward windows.]

Upstairs or in the garden or where——

DULCY

BILL.

[*Holding up his hand.*]

Now—wait.

DULCY.

[*Coming to Bill.*]

But what are they going to think? My not being here—how rude—why, if they——

BILL.

Now, wait—wait!

[*She finally pauses.*]

The Forbeses are not here.

DULCY.

Well, why didn't you tell me so in the first place? After all, Willie, I'm not a mind reader.

GORDON.

Mr. Sterrett has come to see Mr. Forbes on a matter of business.

BILL.

And since he is also a friend of *Miss Forbes*

GORDON.

I've invited him to stay for dinner.

DULCY.

[*None too pleased, particularly about STERRETT's being a friend of Angela's.*]

Oh! So, you're a friend of Angela's—that's lovely! Yes, you *must* stay!

DULCY

[HENRY enters and stands awaiting instructions.]

Just take pot luck with us, Mr. Sterrett. I always say that anyone can drop in—I think that's the nicest kind of a household, don't you?

STERRETT.

Why, yes. You know, I have a dear old aunt——

DULCY.

[*Not waiting to hear.*]

Oh, Henry, get some vases for these flowers—then I'll arrange them. I think arranging flowers is quite a knack, don't you, Mr. Sterrett? Some people can do it, and others can't, you know . . . it's just like an ear for music. Either you have it, or you haven't it, and there you are!

BILL.

Mr. Sterrett is in the advertising business—not the music business.

STERRETT.

Oh, but what she says is very true—very true, indeed. But as I was saying. This dear old aunt of mine—I—ah—she——

[*DULCY is giving the flowers to HENRY and pays no attention.*]

[*STERRETT fails to make an audience either of SMITH or BILL.*]

I—ah—suppose I wait in the next room for Mr. Forbes?

DULCY

DULCY.

Of course. Henry, show Mr. Sterrett into the library. There are some lovely books there. My books are my best friends, Mr. Sterrett.

STERRETT.

Thank you.

[*Exits.*]

DULCY.

Henry, fix up the little green room for to-night. Fix it nicely.

HENRY.

Yes, ma'am.

[*He follows STERRETT off.*]

GORDON.

He's not going to stay tonight!

DULCY.

[*Has picked up an evening paper, and is already absorbed in it.*]

No, darling, but someone else is.

BILL.

Still another?

DULCY.

(*With the paper.*) Oh, what do you think? Mrs. Harper was acquitted! I always say, if a woman is good looking, no jury on earth will convict her.

DULCY

GORDON.

Dulcy, never mind that. Who else is coming?

DULCY.

[*Immersed in paper.*]

“A demonstration that lasted fifteen minutes greeted the acquittal of Mrs. ——”

GORDON.

Dulcy!

DULCY.

[*Slowly, as she scans the article.*]

I just want to see what she wore.

GORDON.

Dulcy, listen to me!

DULCY.

Well, dear?

GORDON.

Who else is coming?

DULCY.

[*Putting paper down.*]

You'll never guess.

GORDON.

[*Tiredly.*]

I'm sure I've no idea, Dulcy.

DULCY.

[*Going to him.*]

Schuyler Van Dyck!

DULCY

BILL.

Schuyler Van Dyck!

DULCY.

One of *the* Van Dycks, and he's worth millions!

GORDON.

Schuyler Van Dyck's coming *here!*

DULCY.

Yes— isn't it wonderful! He's a marvelous man, and you ought to hear him play the piano. You'd never think he was a Van Dyck—he's so democratic.

BILL.

Where the devil did you meet *him?*

DULCY.

Oh, several places, and this afternoon he was at Mrs. Kennedy's and played for us. He had a lot of invitations, and he accepted mine.

[DULCY *returns to table and replaces newspaper neatly, then gives the sofa cushions a touch.* GORDON *follows her, speaking as he goes.*]

GORDON.

But, my dear, having this man here with Forbes—how do we know it's going to——

DULCY.

Oh, but it will—Mr. Van Dyck's a business man too, darling. He owns all kinds of things—

DULCY

railroads—railroads—I think—some of them are. He'll help entertain Mr. Forbes with them.

GORDON.

But Forbes isn't the kind of man that wants to be entertained. That's just it!

DULCY.

[Going to him.]

Darling, leave Mr. Forbes to me.

[Puts arms around him.]

I've got a *real* surprise for you!

GORDON.

Another one?

DULCY.

A wonderful one! Just for you!

BILL.

One thing that Dulcy never learned is the difference between a surprise and a shock.

[Enter HENRY, leaving the door open, with a bowl and a vase of flowers, which he places on table.]

DULCY.

You shut up, Willie.

GORDON.

But what is it? Has it got to do with Forbes?

DULCY

DULCY.

Yes, darling, and it's something that's going to help you a great deal with Mr. Forbes.

[BILL goes solemnly to GORDON and shakes his hand.]

BILL.

Sometimes I think our family must have adopted Dulcy.

[Exit.]

DULCY.

Oh, Henry! There'll be two more for dinner.

HENRY.

Yes, ma'am.

DULCY.

That makes—nine, doesn't it?

HENRY.

Yes, ma'am.

[Exit HENRY upstairs.]

DULCY.

I love a big table, don't you, Gordon? There's something so hospitable about it.

[She is looking around for the spots at which to place the flowers.]

GORDON.

Nine? Then there's still another coming—besides Van Dyck?

DULCY

DULCY.

[*With the air of someone revealing a great secret.*]

Yes!

GORDON.

What are you trying to do—solve the housing problem?

DULCY.

[*Picking up vase of flowers.*]

Just wait, darling! You'll be so excited!

[*Breaking the big news over SMITH'S shoulder.*]

Vincent—is coming!

GORDON.

[*At sea.*]

Vincent?

DULCY.

Yes. Isn't it *wonderful*?

[*Crossing to piano with vase of flowers.*]

That looks pretty, doesn't it?

GORDON.

[*Trying to recall.*]

Vincent—Vincent—who the devil is Vincent?

DULCY.

[*Indicating the bowl.*]

Or do you think this one ought to go over there and that one here?

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Annoyed.*]

I don't know. Who is this man?

DULCY.

[*Going down and leaning over Smith's shoulder.*]

Well, you don't need to get angry at me, darling, just because I want to make the place look nice.

GORDON.

I'm not angry—but——

DULCY.

I'm doing it for you, darling. You know, with Mr. Forbes coming——

GORDON.

I know, but—tell me about this man——

DULCY.

Vincent Leach? Don't you remember? You and I met him at Mrs. Peabody's last week—you know, the big scenario writer.

GORDON.

[*Faintly recalling.*]

Oh, yes. Is *he* coming here?

DULCY.

Yes! Isn't it wonderful?

[*Picks up the bowl from the table and starts toward piano with it.*]

DULCY

GORDON.

But look here now—Dulcy, will you leave those flowers alone, and come here and talk to me?

DULCY.

Just a minute, darling.

[She replaces the vase on the piano with the bowl, then takes the vase back and places it on the table.]

A time and a place for everything. There!
[She seats herself on his lap.]

GORDON.

But, dear, why do you want to mix this man Leach up with Forbes? Van Dyck may be all right, but——

DULCY.

Ah! That's the secret!

GORDON.

But I don't like—secrets. This isn't a—game.

DULCY.

Promise you won't tell! Cross your heart!

GORDON.

Yes, yes.

DULCY.

Well, then—Vincent and Angela——

[Kisses him.]

—like each other.

DULCY

GORDON.

You mean—Forbes' daughter?

DULCY.

[*Nodding.*]

Isn't it wonderful? So I invited them both here so they'll have the whole week-end together. And at the same time he can meet her parents. You never can tell what will happen.

GORDON.

But, Dulcy, dear, you don't know Angela so well, and—this man Leach—what do you know about *him*?

DULCY.

I know all about him. He's a big scenario writer, and just the man for Angie. He's—he's so practical, and she's a dreamer. Opposites should marry—you know that, darling.

GORDON.

But, Dulcy, now——

DULCY.

And what else do you think? I'm going to get him to help me with some of *my* scenarios while he's here.

GORDON.

But why, dear——?

DULCY.

To make them better.

DULCY

GORDON.

No, no—I mean—why are you trying to match this fellow Leach with Angela? What do *you* care about it?

DULCY.

Don't you see?

GORDON.

No.

DULCY.

Can't you guess?

GORDON.

No.

DULCY.

Well, if Angie *likes* Mr. Leach, and marries him——

GORDON.

Yes?

DULCY.

And *I* fix it——

GORDON.

Well?

DULCY.

Well—I'm your wife——

[GORDON *springs up in alarm, dropping*
DULCY *off his lap.*]



DULCY: "IF ANGELA AND MR. LEACH LIKE EACH OTHER, AND IF SHE MARRIES HIM——"—(Act I)

DULCY

GORDON.

Now, Dulcy dear——

DULCY.

That will make Mr. Forbes so grateful that he'll have to give you more than sixteen and two-thirds of the percentage.

GORDON.

Good heavens, Dulcy! Now——

DULCY.

[*Ecstatically.*]

I figured it all out myself!

GORDON.

But, now wait!

[*He paces the floor.*]

DULCY.

Gordon, darling—don't be upset about it. I know they ought to marry—I just know it. It's a woman's intuition. (*A pause.*) Just as I knew I ought to marry you, dear.

[*GORDON stops.*]

It was because I loved you, darling, and wanted to help you, and—and——

GORDON.

[*Going to her and embracing her.*]

Yes, and you do help me.

DULCY.

Well, then——

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Tenderly.*]

And you're not sorry that you married me, instead of Arthur, with all those millions?

DULCY.

You're going to have millions, too, dear—at least thousands. And I loved you—not Arthur.

[*She buries her head on his shoulder.*]

GORDON.

Dulcy, dear.

[*He kisses her neck.*]

DULCY.

And I'd love you if you didn't have a cent, and—and stand by you, and help you. You do want me to help you, don't you?

GORDON.

[*Reluctantly.*]

Why—I—ah—yes—ah——

DULCY.

Well then, let me!

GORDON.

But you don't understand, dear. Try to see my position.

DULCY.

But I do see it. You need Mr. Forbes' help and I'm going to get it for you.

DULCY

GORDON.

I need it in a business way. And as it's only in a business way, I feel that I ought to handle it alone—in office hours. Don't you see?

DULCY.

[Turning away on the verge of tears.]

I feel almost as if I were being—exiled.

GORDON.

[Embracing her.]

Well, you mustn't—you aren't being exiled. Just realize that in this particular affair you're my silent partner, and a very important one, too. Don't you know, dear, if it weren't for you I couldn't go to town day after day and fight! There!—you're really helping me all the time, by just being *you*.

[He steps back from her.]

Furthermore, don't you remember that you promised me that you'd let me manage my own business matters?

DULCY.

When?

GORDON.

Three months ago? When we came back from our honeymoon?

DULCY.

Why, I never did.

DULCY

GORDON.

The time that you practically discharged my secretary?

DULCY.

[*Remembering.*]

Oh!

GORDON.

You thought Shepherd was dishonest simply because he wore a heavy black moustache.

DULCY.

Oh, Gordon, darling, I know I've done some silly things, but when I married you, dearest, I did promise to stand beside you all my life and love you and help you, and that's what I think I ought to do now. That's why I'm doing it.

GORDON.

But, Dulcy——

DULCY.

Well, Mr. Forbes *is* taking advantage of you and I'm not going to let him—that's all!

GORDON.

[*Desperately.*]

But that isn't the point. In the position that I am I have to go ahead with it. I wouldn't want anything to happen.

[*Pleading affectionately.*]

Don't you see, dear, if I'm not in that merger, I'll lose—everything!

DULCY

DULCY.

But only sixteen and two-thirds per cent—it's such a funny number, too. I don't see why you couldn't get a nice even number—like twenty-five. (*She pauses.*) Or fifty!

[BILL enters.]

BILL.

Well, has she fixed it?

DULCY.

We've been all through it quietly, Willie, and it's settled.

GORDON.

Now, Dulcy, you must listen.

DULCY.

Now—now—not another word. Just let—let—sleeping dogs lie and everything is bound to come out all right. It always does.

[DULCY turns up stage.]

Oh, here's Mr. Van Dyck!

[*Rushing to the window.*]

Come right in this way, Mr. Van Dyck! That's right—here you are!

[SCHUYLER VAN DYCK enters through window. He is aristocratic and well-dressed. He has a bag of golf-clubs over his left shoulder and is carrying a suitcase.]

Well, you found the way, didn't you—you're like me—you've got a bump of location. Henry

DULCY

will take your things—where's Henry?—Willie, send for Henry! My, this is lovely!

[BILL *pulls bell cord.*]

So glad to see you in our own little nest, Mr. Van Dyck.

[VAN DYCK *has put his suitcase and golf-bag down.* DULCINEA *leads him down to SMITH.*]

This is my husband, Mr. Van Dyck. Mr. Van Dyck, Gordon, that I've been telling you so much about.

[*As an after-thought.*]

And my brother, Willie.

[HENRY *comes down stairs.*]

VAN DYCK.

[*As he shakes Smith's hand.*]

Mr. Smith, how do you do, sir?

GORDON.

I'm very pleased to know you, Mr. Van Dyck.

DULCY.

[*Turning up to Henry.*]

Henry, take Mr. Van Dyck's things. So glad you brought your golf clubs. We'll see that you use them.

[BILL *has circled around the table and comes down to Mr. VAN DYCK and offers hand.*]

BILL.

My name is Parker.

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

I'm delighted, Mr. Parker.

[*BILL retires again.*]

I'm very much afraid that I'm intruding.

GORDON.

Why, not at all.

DULCY.

Intruding! I should say not!

[*HENRY has picked up the bags and is awaiting VAN DYCK on the platform.*]

VAN DYCK.

Mrs. Smith was so—so very gracious as to ask me to be your guest. May I—accept with a proviso?

GORDON.

Why, certainly.

VAN DYCK.

It is barely possible that some business matters will call me back to town. In that event——

[*He smiles his rare smile.*]

I hope you will pardon me.

DULCY.

Of course! We all understand business here. Don't we, Gordon, darling? Business before pleasure!

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

You're very good.

DULCY.

Henry, show Mr. Van Dyck to his room.
Henry will show you, Mr. Van Dyck.

VAN DYCK.

Thank you—if I may, I shall rejoin you
presently.

DULCY.

[*Calling to him as he is going off.*]

Dinner at eight-twenty!

BILL.

Eight-twenty? Have you been reading *Vanity Fair* again?

DULCY.

Everybody dines at eight-twenty, Willie.
It's continental.

[*DULCY turns to her husband.*]

Well, how do you like Mr. Van Dyck? Nice,
isn't he?

GORDON.

He's all right, I guess.

DULCY.

Wait till you hear him play the piano. A
lovely touch, and so soulful.

DULCY

BILL.

Don't forget to ask him to play.

[HENRY comes down the steps. GORDON turns up into windows.]

DULCY.

[Going to BILL and sitting beside him.]

Dear, no—right after dinner. We're going to have a nice musical evening. Music after eating helps digestion. All the new doctors say so.

[HENRY exits. BILL looks after him uncomfortably.]

BILL.

Dulcy!

DULCY.

Well, Willie?

BILL.

When you took this butler out of Sing Sing—

DULCY.

[Rising.]

Sing Sing? He wasn't in Sing Sing!

BILL.

You didn't go way out to Leavenworth, did you?

DULCY.

Now, I know just what you're going to say, but it isn't true. Just because Henry made one

DULCY

false step doesn't mean he's going to make another. If you ask me, I think there's enough sorrow in the world without trying to make things worse. Every cloud has a silver lining, and—so has Henry.

BILL.

Yes. The question is, how did he get it?

DULCY.

It doesn't matter in the least—he's all right now. He promised me. Besides, he has to report to the probation officer every week, and tell him everything he does.

BILL

Oh, he *has* to tell him everything?

DULCY.

Every week.

BILL.

You don't think he has any—secrets?

DULCY.

You must be more tolerant, Willie. You know, there's so much good in the best of us—and so much bad in the worst of us—well, it ill behooves the best of us—

[She flounders, but is saved by the door bell.]

GORDON.

Here are the Forbeses!

DULCY

DULCY.

Wait, Gordon—let that poor Henry answer. The trouble with the world, Willie, is that it doesn't give the under-dog a chance. Live and let live—is my motto.

[Enter HENRY.]

BILL.

I surrender. (*A pause.*) Oh, Dulcy!

[Exit HENRY on the other side.]

Why don't you raise his salary?

DULCY.

I have.

GORDON.

Now remember, Dulcy, just leave Forbes to me—and—don't forget this is a very important business matter——

DULCY.

Now, don't worry, darling. Worrying is the very worst thing you can do—everybody says so. I was reading where Dr. Crane said in the *Globe* the other day—by worrying you can catch things.

[HENRY opens the door. The voices of the FORBESSES are heard; they enter. First, MR. FORBES—then MRS. FORBES—then ANGELA. The greetings are ad lib. Dulcy shakes hands with each, passing them to GORDON, who does likewise.]

DULCY

DULCY.

Well, here is Mr. Forbes now, and Mrs. Forbes! How charming you look! And Angela!! You've come to see me at last! My, such red cheeks! Just like two ripe apples!

[FORBES *is already deep in business talk with SMITH, but DULCY turns to him blithely.*]

Mr. Forbes——

[FORBES *turns to her.*]

Did you have a nice ride out from the city? Awfully pretty, isn't it—Westchester?

[FORBES *agrees with a nod—is about to turn back to SMITH.*]

Did you come out the short way or the long way?

FORBES.

[*It is already evident that Dulcy is going to be just the person for him.*]

Ah—what was that?

DULCY.

Did you come out the short way or the long way?

FORBES.

Ah—let me see. (*A pause.*) Do you know, Eleanor?

MRS. FORBES.

[*His second wife; a very feminine person of about thirty-five; good looking and a bit flighty.*]

What, dear?

DULCY

FORBES.

Mrs. Smith was just asking if——

DULCY.

Did you come out the short way or the long way?

MRS. FORBES.

Which is the way through Hartsdale?

DULCY.

Oh, that's the short way—you should have come the long way. No, I think that *is* the long way, isn't it? Hartsdale?—Yes. No——

GORDON.

[Diplomatically.]

Well, it doesn't really matter.

DULCY.

No, no—both ways are awfully pretty.

[She has said this to MRS. FORBES, and FORBES and SMITH have turned immediately to each other to renew their conversation. They haven't a chance.]

Though I don't suppose *you* got much chance to look at the scenery, did you, Mr. Forbes—driving the car? Don't you think driving is awfully hard work, Mr. Forbes?

FORBES.

Why, no, I rather like it.

DULCY

DULCY.

Like it? Really! Oh! Well, it wouldn't do if all our tastes were alike, would it?

[Turns away just as Henry enters.]

Henry, take the things right up—you know the rooms.

[DULCY turns up to MRS. FORBES.]

Mrs. Forbes, you and your husband are to have the shell-pink suite. It looks just like a bridal suite.

[MRS. FORBES giggles and DULCY laughs with her.]

The bridal suite! Oh, Mr. Forbes——

[She goes down to him.]

Mr. Forbes—you and your wife are going to have the bridal suite!

[FORBES tries to understand the joke, but without success.]

And, Angie——Oh, there you are! I forgot you and Willie were old friends. Naughty, naughty!

[HENRY is on the stairs with the bags.]

Well, how is little Angie! My, what a pretty necklace! It's new, isn't it? Pearls, too!

[This registers with HENRY.]

ANGELA.

Father gave it to me for my birthday.

DULCY.

Your father. Really—wasn't that sweet of him?

DULCY

[To FORBES.]

Your own manufacture?

FORBES.

Oh, no!

DULCY.

Real pearls! Angela, fancy your having a string of real pearls! Isn't that wonderful!

[Remembers HENRY'S presence.]

Take the bags right up, Henry.

BILL.

Yes, Henry.

[Exit HENRY upstairs.]

DULCY.

Angie is going to have the cutest little room of all. Just wait till you see it!

ANGELA.

Oh, thank you.

[VAN DYCK comes downstairs.]

DULCY.

[Turning Angela up stage as if for a confidence.]

And wait till you see what else I have for you! You'll be surprised, and—oh, here's Mr. Van Dyck!

[In her element.]

Mrs. Forbes, Mr. Van Dyck!

MRS. FORBES.

How do you do?

DULCY

DULCY.

And Miss Forbes——

VAN DYCK.

[*Bowing.*]

Miss Forbes!

[ANGELA *bows.*]

DULCY.

And Mr. Forbes—Mr. Schuyler Van Dyck of New York.

VAN DYCK.

C. Roger Forbes?

FORBES.

I'm certainly glad to know you, Mr. Van Dyck. I believe I know something of your interests. In fact, I just missed meeting you at the International Metals conference last week.

VAN DYCK.

Yes? Well, I hope we can have a little chance to talk down here. I'm very much interested in jewelry.

DULCY.

[*With a triumphant look at her husband.*]

You see, Gordon?

FORBES.

[*Aware that something is going on.*]

What's that?

DULCY

GORDON.

Oh, it was just—ah—that is, Mrs. Smith thought——

[HENRY comes downstairs.]

DULCY.

Oh, we're all forgetting Mr.—What's-his-name—in the library—a gentleman to see you, Mr. Forbes, on business. Henry, tell the gentleman in the library to come in.

[Exit HENRY.]

GORDON.

It's your advertising man.

FORBES.

Oh, yes—Sterrett.

[ANGELA turns sharply at the mention of the name.]

I took the liberty of leaving word for him to come here—I had to get away early.

GORDON.

Why, certainly.

DULCY.

And so that you'll have lots of time to talk business, I've invited him to stay for dinner.

[She looks proudly toward her husband as though asking approbation for this remark. GORDON is pleased with her for the first time.]

DULCY

ANGELA.

Oh. Mr. Sterrett is going to stay for dinner?

DULCY.

Yes—because he's a friend of *yours*, Angie, dear.

[*Quickly.*]

And because of the business, of course. Well what do you girls say? Shall we leave the men to talk business? Wouldn't you like to see your rooms? You haven't been over the house at all, you know.

MRS. FORBES.

Why, we'd love to.

DULCY.

Gordon, darling, you must show Mr. Forbes and the others over the grounds.

[*She is shepherding* MRS. F. and ANGELA *toward the stairs.*]

You get a beautiful view from the lawn, Mr. Forbes. And don't forget to show him the garden, darling—all our vegetables are out of our own garden, Mr. Forbes. Then later *you* must see the garden, Mrs. Forbes—and Angie. You know, there's nothing like country life, is there? Out next to Nature, you know. We're just gypsies—regular gypsies. New York is a wonderful place to visit, but I wouldn't like to live there.

[*They exeunt upstairs.*]

DULCY

BILL.

[Breaking the spell.]

All in favor of the garden, say, "Aye."

GORDON.

Smoke?

FORBES.

Thanks.

[He selects a cigar.]

VAN DYCK.

Thank you.

[Takes a cigarette.]

[FORBES, after a glance around the room, heads for a stiff chair.]

GORDON.

[Indicating an easy chair.]

Oh, sit here, Mr. Forbes.

FORBES.

Thanks—I prefer a stiff chair—my back, you know.

[Enter STERRETT.]

STERRETT.

Ah! Good afternoon, Chief.

FORBES.

Hello, Sterrett. Too bad to make you come way out here, but——

DULCY

STERRETT.

Not at all—not at all! Particularly, as Mr. Smith has insisted on my staying to dinner. Has Angela come?

FORBES.

[*Patting him on back.*]

Oh, yes, she's come. You've met Mr. Parker?

STERRETT.

Oh, yes.

FORBES.

And Mr. Schuyler Van Dyck?

STERRETT.

Mr. Schuyler Van Dyck?

VAN DYCK.

[*Shaking his hand.*]

Mr. Sterrett.

STERRETT.

I've heard of you, Mr. Van Dyck.

VAN DYCK.

Yes?

STERRETT.

[*Crisply.*]

Yes, sir. They tell me you have advertising interests, on the q. t.

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Well, it's—it's possible, yes.

STERRETT.

I'm an advertising man myself.

VAN DYCK.

Really?

BILL.

Yes—S. S. Q. & L. Agency.

STERRETT.

Yes, I personally handle all of Mr. Forbes' business.

VAN DYCK.

That so?

STERRETT.

Yes, sir. I've made the nation Forbes-conscious.

BILL.

Forbes—what?

STERRETT.

Forbes-conscious. I have made Forbes Jewelry Products a part of the country's buying habit.

FORBES.

It's wonderful—wonderful what the younger generation is doing in a business way.

DULCY

GORDON.

It certainly is.

FORBES.

Why, when I was breaking into business, sir, do you think that a young man like that would have been entrusted with the handling of such important matters?

GORDON.

No, sir.

FORBES.

No, sir—he would not! Would he, Mr. Parker?

BILL.

[*With a look at STERRETT.*]

No, sir, he would not!

FORBES.

But to-day, not only is he entrusted with them, but he is actually given the preference over an older man. I find myself doing it.

STERRETT.

Oh, I don't know, Chief. I'm no unusual specimen. That is, so far as my youth is concerned. Mozart was composing at fifteen; William Cullen Bryant wrote *Thanatopsis* when he was nineteen; Homer did part of the *Iliad*——

BILL.

[*Rising.*]

Suppose we *all* go out and look at the garden?

DULCY

SMITH.

Yes, that's a good idea.

FORBES.

If you don't mind, I'll put my car in your garage.

GORDON.

Certainly.

FORBES.

That is, if there's room.

GORDON.

Oh, plenty. Our car isn't here at present. It's being repaired.

BILL.

[To VAN DYCK.]

You must find it rather a relief to get away from business occasionally.

VAN DYCK.

Yes, just to relax. It's very wonderful.

FORBES.

[Turning back to VAN DYCK.]

I imagine you've been kept pretty well tied down lately.

[All except STERRETT have strolled up to the window.]

VAN DYCK.

Well, yes—to a degree. Of course, I have things pretty well systematized.

DULCY

FORBES.

Of course.

SMITH.

Now, right here at the left is where the garden begins. You can see for yourself——

[*Exeunt through windows*—SMITH, FORBES, VAN DYCK and BILL.]

[STERRETT, somewhat puzzled at losing his audience, decides to go along. ANGELA comes down stairway.]

ANGELA.

[*Very impersonally.*]

Oh, hello, Tom!

STERRETT.

Angela! I'm here, you see.

ANGELA.

[*Selecting a magazine.*]

Yes, I see.

STERRETT.

Well, aren't you glad to see me?

ANGELA.

You came to see father, didn't you?

STERRETT.

Why, no—that is—yes—but——

ANGELA.

Have you seen him?

DULCY

STERRETT.

Yes, but—that was business and——

ANGELA.

I know—it's always business with you men.
You're all alike.

STERRETT.

You talk as though you'd examined the whole
city.

ANGELA.

Well, I did know another man who was just
like you.

STERRETT.

Who is he?

ANGELA.

[Looking up from magazine for first time.]

Oh, don't be silly. I shouldn't tell you even
if you weren't so rude. I simply say you are all
alike. Your idea of romance is to sit in the
moonlight and talk about the income tax.

STERRETT.

[Sitting beside her.]

Now, look here, Angela. You know I'm crazy
about you, and I've told you what I'll do for
you. I'll devote my entire life to you.

ANGELA.

And give up business?

DULCY

STERRETT.

[*Swallows.*]

Well, you wouldn't want me to give it up, would you? Right at the beginning of my career! Why, when you father signs these new contracts——

ANGELA.

[*Throwing magazine down beside her and rising.*]

Contracts! Bother the contracts! It's always contracts!

STERRETT.

[*Rising.*]

But they mean our future.

ANGELA.

[*Turning.*]

Our future? I didn't know that *we* were going to have any!

STERRETT.

Well, we are! You just watch me! I've always got what I was after in business, and——

ANGELA.

Well, I'm not—business.

STERRETT.

I—I didn't mean just that, Angela.

ANGELA.

Oh, sometimes I feel that I don't ever want to talk to another business man in my life!

DULCY

STERRETT.

I notice that you don't mind talking to a moving picture man, though!

ANGELA

[Wheeling.]

What do you mean by that?

STERRETT.

I saw you with that bird Leach at the Biltmore yesterday.

ANGELA.

Well, what of it. Mr. Leach is a very charming man.

STERRETT.

He's got a swelled head.

ANGELA.

He's entitled to one.

STERRETT.

Look here—has he been making love to you?

ANGELA.

Well, at least he hasn't been talking business.

[She turns away.]

STERRETT.

Now look here, Angela——

ANGELA.

Oh, Tom, don't be silly! If I didn't know any more about girls than you do, I'd go some place

DULCY

and learn! That other man talked business, too, and that's why I—what does a girl care about business, and things like that? She wants something else in her life—that's what makes her a girl. She wants romance—and a thrill—and something real—and she wants a man to be like all the heroes she ever read about—if she cares about him at all! It may be foolish and all that, but that's what she wants and she's bound to have it! She wants someone to tell her how wonderful she is—whether she is or not—to sweep her off her feet and—carry her away—and——

[One look at Sterrett's face tells her that all this has been wasted.]

Oh, I'm going out into the garden!

[Exit through French window. STERRETT follows.]

STERRETT.

Now look here, Angela! I didn't mean——

[Enter FORBES and SMITH. FORBES looks back after ANGELA and STERRETT.]

FORBES.

Smart chap, Sterrett.

GORDON.

Yes, he—seems to be.

FORBES.

Wide-awake! That's what I like about him.

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Eager to agree.*]

Yes, wide-awake chaps certainly have an advantage.

FORBES.

[*Bluffly.*]

Now, that's the kind of a man I'd like for a son-in-law.

GORDON.

(*Mindful of DULCY's plans.*) Son-in-law?

FORBES.

Yes.

GORDON.

Sterrett?

FORBES.

Yes. Good business head. No foolishness, like most young people. Substantial—that's what I mean. Lord knows, Smith, I'm just as tolerant as anybody, and a little bit more so, but if there is one thing I can't stand it's this frivol-headed, gad-about way of doing things they've got now-a-days.

GORDON.

Oh, absolutely. Yes, indeed.

FORBES.

Damn it—they—they play with life—they don't work. And it's not just the young people

DULCY

that have notions. The worst of it is that—oh, well, what's the use!

[*He pauses.*]

That reminds me. I must apologize for not answering that letter of yours. My wife comes into my office occasionally and uses my stenographer—the one that writes English.

[*He tries to appear half-joking.*]

All day yesterday. She likes to write little stories and movie scenarios. Of course she never sells them.

SMITH.

Well—ah—probably she's just—seeking self-expression.

FORBES.

Yes, I suppose so. She's quite young—Angela's step-mother, you know.

[*DULCY and MRS. FORBES come downstairs.*]

DULCY.

Come right down, Mrs. Forbes. Well, here we are! No more business now! It's time to play!

[*To FORBES.*]

You know one thing poor Gordon has never learned is how to play. He takes everything so seriously. Now, what I like to do is cut loose once in a while—just be children again. Don't you, Mrs. Forbes?

MRS. FORBES.

Yes, indeed—away from everything.

DULCY

DULCY.

Gordon, darling—why don't you take Mrs. Forbes for a stroll out in the garden before dinner—she hasn't seen it yet.

[GORDON *realizes this would leave DULCY with FORBES.*]

Wouldn't you like to see it, Mrs. Forbes?

MRS. FORBES.

Indeed, yes.

DULCY.

Gordon.

SMITH.

[*Turning up to MRS. FORBES.*]

Why, of course.

MRS. FORBES.

It's awfully good of you. You have a beautiful place here. There are some lovely places in Westchester, aren't there?

[*Exeunt MRS. FORBES and SMITH thru the window, SMITH looking back nervously at the possibilities he is leaving.*]

DULCY.

I've got the most wonderful day planned out for you tomorrow, Mr. Forbes. You're going to play and play and play!

FORBES.

[*Alarmed.*]

Me! Thank you very much—but you know I——

DULCY

DULCY.

Oh, but you play golf, don't you?

FORBES.

Well—ah—thank you. It's been so long since——

DULCY.

[*Pursuing him.*]

You'll love our links—they're wonderful!

FORBES.

Yes, but I've been having a lot of trouble with my back lately and——

DULCY.

Oh, really! That's too bad! What you need is exercise. It would be the finest thing in the world for you. Now, you play nine holes of golf with Mr. Van Dyck first thing in the morning.

FORBES.

But, really, Mrs. Smith——

DULCY.

[*Indulgently.*]

You remind me so much of Gordon—that poor darling. You know *he* gets hardly any exercise at all—he works so hard, the poor boy. I don't suppose he's told you, Mr. Forbes, but he's really got a lot of things on hand.

FORBES.

Why, no——

DULCY

DULCY.

You might just as well know—it isn't only the pearl business. He has lots of other interests, too.

FORBES.

What's that?

DULCY.

It's really asking too much of him to make him give up all these other things to come into the jewelry combination—that is, unless it were made worth his while.

[DULCY *effects her master stroke.*]

Of course, if he just got sixteen and two-thirds per cent, he couldn't afford to give up all his time to it—no!

[*Enter through windows—VAN DYCK and BILL.*]

He'd have to look after his other things, too, and you'd be the loser.

FORBES.

Why, I didn't know he had any other——

[*Door bell rings.*]

DULCY.

Oh, there's Mr. Leach now!

[*Calling.*]

Gordon, Gordon, bring Angela in!

[*She sees VAN DYCK.*]

Are you having a nice time, Mr. Van Dyck?
We want everybody to have a nice time.

[*Enter SMITH and MRS. FORBES.*]

[*Enter HENRY. He crosses and exits.*]

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Oh, delightful!

DULCY.

You're to play 18 holes of golf with Mr. Forbes the first thing in the morning.

[FORBES *is delighted.*]

VAN DYCK.

That will be splendid!

GORDON.

Now—now, *I* have a suggestion.

DULCY.

Well, what is it?

SMITH.

Suppose that tomorrow we just let everybody go the way they want to, and——

[*Enter HENRY, followed by VINCENT LEACH.*]

[DULCY *swings down to greet him.*]

DULCY.

[*With great enthusiasm.*]

Oh, *here* he is!

LEACH.

Mrs. Smith, dear lady——

[VINCENT LEACH *is young, very languid, a bit effeminate.*]

DULCY

DULCY.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is Mr. Vincent Leach, the great scenario writer!

[FORBES looks up, puzzled and annoyed. BILL is merely puzzled. VAN DYCK is politely interested. SMITH is all but crazy with apprehension. MRS. FORBES is quite in her element. DULCY passes LEACH over towards MRS. FORBES.]

Mrs. Forbes, Angela's step-mother.

LEACH.

[*Enthusiastically.*]

Oh, how do you do!

DULCY.

And Mr. Forbes, her real father.

[FORBES rises slowly—his dislike has been immediate and intense. LEACH does all the bowing.]

And Mr. Van Dyck.

[*They bow.*]

You've met Gordon, haven't you?

[LEACH shakes SMITH's hand.]

And my brother, Willie.

BILL.

Parker—William.

DULCY.

[ANGELA and STERRETT appear in windows.]

Oh, here she is! Well——

[*She leads ANGELA down to LEACH.*]

DULCY

ANGELA.

Why, Mr. Leach!

LEACH.

Miss Forbes!

STERRETT.

[With cold emphasis.]

How do you do, Leach?

LEACH.

Oh, how are you?

DULCY.

Didn't I tell you I'd have a surprise for you?

FORBES.

[To ANGELA, as she stands with her hand still in LEACH'S, to STERRETT'S great annoyance.]

Oh, then you've met Mr. Leach before?

ANGELA.

Oh, yes.

DULCY.

Why, didn't you know about it? Mr. Leach showed us through his studio the other day. He almost kidnapped your Angela, and made a motion picture star out of her.

FORBES.

[Not quite succeeding in being pleasant about it.]

Oh, is that so?

DULCY

DULCY.

We saw his new picture being taken. Oh, tell us about it, Mr. Leach!

[Whispering loudly to everyone.]

Mr. Leach is a scenario writer—a scenario writer.

LEACH.

[Correcting her.]

If you will pardon me, not scenario writer—scenarist—really.

BILL.

[In mock comprehension.]

Oh, scenarist!

LEACH.

It's the more modern term. The scenarist of today is quite different from the scenario writer of yesterday.

DULCY.

[In her element.]

Mr. Leach says the motion picture business is still in its infancy.

LEACH.

The surface has hardly been scratched. The possibilities are enormous, and the demand for new people—new writers——

[He turns to MRS. F.]

Oh! Mrs. Smith tells me that *you* are writing for the films, my dear Mrs. Forbes!

DULCY

MRS. FORBES.

Well, I'm—trying to——

LEACH.

Well, you go on writing—don't give up—don't let anyone discourage you.

[FORBES *turns away with a mild attack of apoplexy.*]

That was my experience. I just kept on and on until—well, you see.

BILL.

What?

DULCY.

[*In a quick aside.*]

You shut up, Willie!

LEACH.

[*To MRS. FORBES.*]

Yes, you just keep on writing.

[*Then generously taking them all in.*]

All of you—and go and see the pictures. See them and see them and see them.

[*To MRS. F. and VAN DYCK.*]

Study them!

[*To MR. FORBES.*]

Learn how they're made! Now in my last picture, "The Sacred Love"—you've all seen that, I take it?

DULCY.

Oh, yes—a wonderful picture!

DULCY

MRS. F.

Yes!

ANGELA.

I saw it twice. Once with you, Tom.

STERRETT.

Was *that* his picture?

LEACH.

There were some points in that—did you see it, Mr. Forbes?

FORBES.

[*Wild within.*]

No, I—I don't believe I did.

LEACH.

Really! You must come to one of our trade showings at the Hotel Astor——

FORBES.

What?

LEACH.

Just a moment.

[*Consults note-book.*]

At the Hotel Astor, next Tuesday, at 3:30. Of course, it's—it's only a little thing. We're going to do some big things later. The possibilities——

BILL.

Are enormous.

DULCY

LEACH.

[*Falling for it.*]

Oh, *very* big . . . you'd be surprised! Yes, we're going to do some of Shakespeare's things next.

DULCY.

Shakespeare's? Well——

[*Her arms are around her husband's shoulders and she shakes him to pick up the cue.*]

GORDON.

[*Coming to.*]

Really!

LEACH.

Yes, I'm at work on his continuity now. I was telling my director yesterday—I said, you know, Shakespeare had a tremendous feeling for plot. Of course, the dialogue is stilted for modern audiences—but then, you don't have to listen to that in the pictures. But he's still the master.

DULCY.

He's going to organize his own company next.

BILL.

Who—Shakespeare?

DULCY.

No, Willie! Mr. Leach.

DULCY

LEACH.

Yes—the Vincent Leach Productions, Inc.
The stock will be placed on the open market
very soon.

DULCY.

Mr. Van Dyck can tell you how to do it!
He owns lots of moving picture companies—
don't you, Mr. Van Dyck?

LEACH.

[*Really interested.*]

Is that so?

VAN DYCK.

[*Modestly, as always.*]

Well, I'm interested—in a small way.

LEACH.

I'd enjoy talking to you about it later.

[*To MR. FORBES.*]

And how about you, Mr. Forbes? Didn't I
hear that *you* were interested in pictures?

FORBES.

[*Turning away and smothering the line.*]

I don't care a damn about pictures.

LEACH.

[*Not believing his ears.*]

What's that?

FORBES.

I said, I make jewelry.

DULCY

LEACH.

Well, of course, that's very necessary too, in its way.

[FORBES' mouth opens—GORDON rises hurriedly.]

GORDON.

Dulcy!

DULCY!

Ah—let's play a rubber of bridge before dinner! It's so nice and soothing.

[Patting LEACH for fear he has been offended.]

Let me see——

[To MR. FORBES.]

Mr. Forbes, you play bridge, don't you?

FORBES.

No, I'm afraid not.

DULCY.

Oh, yes, you do—you're just modest. Mr. Forbes——

[She is picking the card players out with cool intent.]

And Mr. Sterrett—and Gordon——And I'll make the fourth. Mr. Leach.

(He is absorbed in Angela.) Mr. Leach.

(He turns.) Why don't you and Angela go out on the lawn and see the view?

GORDON.

Dulcy, dear——

DULCY

DULCY.

Where the Japanese garden is going to be?

ANGELA.

[Giving LEACH her hand.]

Come on, Vincent.

LEACH.

[Putting her arm through his.]

Yes, I'd love to see you framed against the glowing splendor of a twilit garden.

[Exeunt ANGELA and LEACH through window.]

BILL.

My golly, the man even makes love in subtitles!

FORBES

I'll see if my car is still in the garage.

[He strides up stage, then turns.]

I'll come back—I think.

[Exit Forbes through window.]

GORDON.

[To Dulcy.]

Now, now, you see——

[He goes out quickly after Forbes.]

BILL.

[Up in the windows.]

You know, this is probably going to be the first week-end party on record that ended on Friday night.

[Exit BILL through windows.]

DULCY

STERRETT.

I think I'll go back to my book.

DULCY.

[Somewhat weakly.]

We'll be starting the game in a minute, Mr. Sterrett.

[Exit STERRETT.]

Well, I'll get the bridge things.

[She turns in the doorway—only Mrs.

FORBES and VAN DYCK are left on the stage.]

Two's company and three's a crowd.

[Exit DULCY.]

MRS. FORBES.

[Rising with a self-conscious laugh.]

I must go and dress for dinner.

VAN DYCK.

Oh, please don't go—I've been wanting to have a chat with you. I've been hearing all about you this afternoon.

MRS. FORBES.

All about me? From whom?

VAN DYCK.

From Mrs. Smith.

MRS. FORBES.

Oh!

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

So you see, I was prepared to be interested—even before I met you.

MRS. FORBES.

[*Sitting.*]

And now the disappointment?

VAN DYCK.

[*Sitting beside her.*]

Oh, far from it. I find you even more interesting than I had anticipated. You have depths.

MRS. FORBES.

Are you going to—fathom them?

VAN DYCK.

If I may.

MRS. FORBES.

And how are you going about it?

[FORBES *is seen strolling behind windows at back.*]

VAN DYCK.

That's *my* secret. But tell me, first—you've been married just a short time?

MRS. FORBES.

Not so short—four years. Why?

[FORBES *comes down into window; sees and hears.*]

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Mrs. Smith tells me that you are becoming quite a novelist.

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, but I'm not yet. I only——

FORBES.

Is that you, Eleanor?

[VAN DYCK rises.]

MRS. FORBES.

Yes, dear.

FORBES.

Oh!

VAN DYCK.

I shall see you later, I hope.

MRS. FORBES.

I hope.

VAN DYCK.

[*Attempting to relieve the tension.*]

I suppose you get a good many ideas for your writings from your husband?

[*The tension is not relieved.*]

[*Exit VAN DYCK through windows.*]

FORBES.

[*Looking from VAN DYCK to his wife.*]

Well!

DULCY

MRS. FORBES.

[*Rises.*]

Well?

FORBES.

What did *that* mean?

MRS. FORBES.

Why, nothing!

FORBES.

Isn't it enough to have Angela go prancing off with that—brainless—conceited—motion picture jack-ass?

MRS. FORBES.

Mr. Leach, do you mean? Why, he's a charming man, and very successful.

FORBES.

Bah! And on top of it, I come in here and find you—spooning with Van Dyck.

MRS. FORBES.

Why, Charlie—how can you say such a thing!

FORBES.

My God, didn't I see it!

MRS. FORBES.

But, Charlie, dear——

FORBES.

I tell you this whole place is going to drive me crazy. I didn't want to come here anyhow.

DULCY

I had a backache, and I wanted to stay home and rest.

MRS. FORBES.

But you couldn't refuse——

FORBES.

And instead of that I've got to get up at some ungodly hour in the morning and go out and play golf. If there is one thing I hate more than anything else in this world, it's golf—unless it's bridge or moving pictures.

MRS. FORBES.

Now, Charlie, dear—when you're here as a guest——

FORBES.

If I could think of a good excuse, I'd go back to town tonight with Sterrett, and take Angela and you with me.

MRS. FORBES

[*Alarmed.*]

But Charlie, you can't do that when——

FORBES.

Don't you suppose I see that woman's plan to throw Angela and that—that film thing together!

MRS. FORBES.

But I tell you he's a most charming man.

DULCY

FORBES.

And I tell you, if it weren't for Smith and our business relations I **WOULD** go back tonight!

MRS. FORBES.

But, Charlie—you can't be so rude!

[Enter GORDON.]

FORBES.

Sh! That reminds me—Oh, Smith.

[SMITH comes down to FORBES. MRS. FORBES turns up to the piano.]

GORDON.

Yes, sir.

FORBES.

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Smith has been telling me something of your other business activities.

GORDON.

Other business activities? Why——

FORBES.

And it came as something of a revelation to me.

GORDON.

But Mrs. Smith couldn't have meant——

[Enter through windows VAN DYCK, who joins MRS. FORBES.]

FORBES.

As you may have been aware, my agreement to admit you on a sixteen and two-thirds basis

DULCY

was founded on the expectation that you would give all your time to the new enterprise.

GORDON.

Yes, of course, Mr. Forbes.

FORBES.

In the circumstances your business and your services would hardly be worth that amount to me.

GORDON.

But, my dear Mr. Forbes—you—you don't understand. Mrs. Smith——

[*Enter DULCY.*]

DULCY.

Oh, here are the bridge players! Come right in, Mr. Sterrett.

[*Enter STERRETT and HENRY, carrying card table.*]

Henry, put the table right here. You know, I hope you men don't mind playing with me—I'm not very good. I always say I don't really play bridge, I play *at* it. But I do love it, and after all, that's what counts, isn't it?

FORBES.

(*Worn out.*) Yes.

DULCY.

That's right, Henry, put the chairs around. Now, I think Mr. Sterrett will sit there. (*Indicating chair opposite her.*) I shall sit here.

DULCY

Let's see—that makes you my partner, Mr. Sterrett. You don't mind, do you?

STERRETT.

[Beyond minding anything.]

Not at all.

[STERRETT crosses at back for one final look out the windows after ANGELA.]

DULCY.

[To FORBES.]

He had to say that. You know I'm an awfully unlucky player—I never have a finesse go right. Well, unlucky at cards—lucky at love—

[Turning to GORDON.]

Lucky at love, Gordie, darling. You're here, of course.

[GORDON is evidently worrying about what DULCY could have said to FORBES. FORBES keeps turning uneasily for a sight of his wife and VAN DYCK.]

[DULCY starts to deal.]

Now look at me—I'm dealing when I ought to be shuffling!

[She gathers up the cards and shuffles awkwardly.]

Come along, Mr. Sterrett! We're going to beat them! Bring that chair.

[STERRETT starts to follow her directions. Three more miserable men have never been seen.]

Is everybody happy?

[The curtain starts slowly down.]

DULCY

And somebody tell me—which is higher—a heart or a spade? I never can remember. And do you discard from strength or weakness, Mr. Sterrett? Of course it doesn't matter——

[She continues her chatter, as

[THE CURTAIN FALLS.]

ACT II

The scene is the same as Act I; the time is immediately after dinner, on the same day. Although it is evening, the French windows at the rear still stand open. The stage is in semi-darkness—only one or two of the lamps are lighted—but a shaft of moonlight shoots through the windows. The dining room, at the left, is brilliantly lighted, and the chatter of many people, with the clink of glasses and the occasional scrape of a chair, can be distinctly heard. For an appreciable period after the rise of the curtain only the sound of this merry gathering can be heard. Over the others the voice of VINCENT LEACH rings out clearly—"I said to Mr. Breitenstein, 'Don't you worry about those German films.'" Then the babble drowns his further remarks.

DULCY, resplendent in a golden evening dress, presently enters, peering back as though expecting someone to follow her. She beckons excitedly to someone in the other room, and MRS. FORBES enters.

DULCY.

[In excited tones.]

Isn't he wonderful?

MRS. FORBES.

[Also flushed with excitement.]

Who?

DULCY

DULCY.

Vincent Leach!

[*Banteringly.*]

Ah, you thought I meant Mr. Van Dyck, didn't you? Ah, ha!

MRS. FORBES.

[*Confused.*]

Why—I didn't know——

DULCY.

Now, now! It doesn't take a brick wall to fall on *me*. But seriously, he's mad about her!

MRS. FORBES.

[*With just a touch of apprehension.*]

Do you really think so?

DULCY.

And she hasn't taken her eyes off him since he arrived! I tell you, they're in love!

MRS. FORBES.

[*Looking off.*]

There *is*—something about him. The only thing is——

DULCY.

I wouldn't be surprised if they became engaged—right here in my house. Wouldn't that be nice, after my bringing them together?

MRS. FORBES.

But you're sure it's all right—positive that Mr. Leach is——

DULCY

DULCY.

Of course, I am—he's just the man for Angela.
Ssh! Here's Mr. Sterrett.

[The two women draw up against the wall as STERRETT enters. His hands are deep in his pockets, and he is sore. He looks back as he enters, then starts across the room. A few steps further he looks back again, as ANGELA'S laugh is heard. He then stalks out the windows.]

[DULCY titters.]

DULCY.

He's mad! Let's see what happened!

[ANGELA comes running on. She is happily excited, being pursued. LEACH follows her, capturing her at the piano, and holding her with her back toward him, giving MRS. F. and DULCY a chance to escape into the dining room unseen.]

LEACH.

Now I've got you!

ANGELA.

And what are you going to do with me?

LEACH.

[Turning her around.]

I'm going to tell you—how wonderful you are.

ANGELA.

[Liking it.]

Oh, my!

DULCY

LEACH.

You are! You're like a beautiful warm dawn
—just your magic presence——

[VAN DYCK and MRS. FORBES enter R.]

ANGELA.

[*Stopping* LEACH.]

Ssh!

VAN DYCK.

But surely if one has a talent it should be
developed.

ANGELA.

Shall we sit down?

[LEACH *makes a gesture towards chairs by
the piano.*]

Oh, not there—here.

[*She bounces over to platform of staircase
and sits on steps behind the hydrangeas.
LEACH takes his place beside her.*)]

MRS. FORBES.

[*Convinced by now she is a potential George
Sand.*]

But I'm afraid I'm just a dabbler and always
will be.

VAN DYCK.

[*Sitting beside her.*]

Ah, but I'm sure you're wrong! You must
be wrong.

[*Enter FORBES and GORDON. All of the
men, except STERRETT, are in evening clothes.*]

DULCY

FORBES.

Well, as a straight business proposition I must say——

[He sees his wife with VAN DYCK, and stops short.]

Huh!

[VAN DYCK gets up from the easy chair.]

VAN DYCK.

Sit here, Mr. Forbes.

FORBES.

No, thank you. I prefer a stiff chair.

[He makes no move to sit, however.]

SMITH.

[Indicates chair.]

Here you are, Mr. Forbes.

[Enter BILL.]

BILL.

Everybody ready for a nice musical evening?

[STERRETT, still sulking, comes in silently through the French windows. DULCY enters at the same time, and immediately takes characteristic charge of the situation.]

DULCY.

Well, this is going to be jolly, isn't it? Let's have a little light on the subject. *(She switches on the lights.)* Let me see— Yes, everybody's here.

[MRS. FORBES, anxious to relieve the tension maintained by her husband, leaves

DULCY

VAN DYCK *and follows* DULCY. DULCY *puts her arm around her.*]

I love a big house and lots of company. If only it were a winter night, we could gather around the fireplace and tell ghost stories.

[FORBES *has made up his mind to sit and has headed for the stiff chair.* DULCY *seizes him.*]

Oh, no, Mr. Forbes—you must take the easy chair—that's for you—yes.

[She pulls him across to it.]

FORBES.

[Cursing the conventions of chivalry.]

But I really would rather—that is——

DULCY.

Now, not a word—I know you're polite and want to leave it for me, but I insist on your having it.

[GORDON *in his attempts to prevent* DULCY *has circled around behind table to easy chair. His efforts are unavailing.* DULCY *forces* MR. FORBES *into the chair.*]

I wouldn't dream of anyone else's having it but you. Now sit right in it—that's right—way back. It's awfully comfortable—just the thing after eating.

[MRS. FORBES *has seated herself;* VAN DYCK *is entertaining her.*]

It'll rest you for tomorrow—for your horse-back riding.

DULCY

FORBES.

[In great alarm.]

Horse-back!

DULCY.

Yes, didn't you hear us talking about it? In the afternoon. We're making up a party to go to the Sound and you're in it.

[Enter HENRY with coffee, on a tea wagon.

He pushes it across to DULCY.]

Well, who's for coffee? Coffee—coffee!

[BILL has wandered over to the piano and has seated himself. DULCY pours into the cups on small tray.]

It's a lovely ride to the Sound. You'll go, won't you, Mr. Van Dyck?

VAN DYCK.

(With MRS. FORBES.)

What's that? Oh, yes—yes, indeed.

DULCY.

[Whispering.]

You and Mrs. Forbes can go together.

[VAN DYCK returns to MRS. F. FORBES has been turning around to locate his wife and daughter.]

I'll ride with Mr. Forbes. Here you are, Henry.

[HENRY serves coffee.]

GORDON.

(To FORBES.) Now this was what I wanted to show you. These are our Number Three's;

DULCY

we are turning these out at an extremely low price, and the German formula can't touch them. Just examine these.

[FORBES *puts on glasses and does so.*]

[HENRY *returns for two more coffees; he offers one to FORBES, who refuses.*]

DULCY.

We're going to have a lovely day for it tomorrow. Did you see that sunset? Angela, you and Mr. Leach are to go along, too. And Mr. Sterrett—where is that Mr. Sterrett?

STERRETT.

(*Behind her.*) I'm here.

DULCY.

Oh! There you are! I'd almost forgotten you.

STERRETT.

[*Submerged in the gloom.*]

That's all right.

DULCY.

It's too bad you can't stay over, Mr. Sterrett. I'm sure you'd enjoy it.

[HENRY *serves ANGELA and LEACH, who both accept. His offers to BILL and STERRETT are refused.*]

You know, the paper says rain for tomorrow, but it's always wrong. I have the worst luck with the weather whenever I go any place. When I take my umbrella it never rains, and if I don't take it——

DULCY

[BILL has started on a solo of "Chop Sticks" as an anodyne.]

Come away from the piano, Willie. . . . Mr. Van Dyck is going to play us something—aren't you, Mr. Van Dyck?

VAN DYCK.

Why—ah—a little later.

[BILL starts another one-finger solo.]

GORDON.

If you'll examine those you'll see that they are the same grain and luster as the Hammond Number Six.

DULCY.

Oh, do stop, Willie!

FORBES.

Mmm.

[A pause.]

Angela!

[There is no answer.]

Angela!!

ANGELA.

[Coming to.]

Yes, father.

FORBES.

Just let me see those pearls of yours for a minute, will you?

DULCY

ANGELA.

Yes, father.

[ANGELA and LEACH rise. LEACH reaches as if to remove the pearls, but ANGELA hands him her coffee instead and removes pearls herself. HENRY steps up to ANGELA to relieve her of the pearls. She gives them to him. BILL strikes a bass note three or four times in warning, rising as he does so. DULCY and SMITH rise, their eyes on HENRY. HENRY gives the pearls to FORBES; DULCY gives a huge sigh of relief. ANGELA and LEACH resume their seat on the bench again. BILL sits again at piano.]

DULCY.

Are you ready now, Mr. Van Dyck—it's your turn!

VAN DYCK.

Oh, really, I—I don't think that I should play. Mr. Forbes and your husband would much prefer to discuss jewelry, I'm sure.

DULCY.

Oh no, they wouldn't. Would you, Mr. Forbes? (*He is studying the necklace.*) Mr. Forbes!

FORBES.

[*Looking up.*]

Huh?

DULCY.

Wouldn't you like to hear Mr. Van Dyck play the piano?

DULCY

FORBES.

Oh, yes—yes.

DULCY.

You see—and I know Mrs. Forbes wants you to play—don't you, dear?

MRS. F.

Oh, yes.

DULCY.

And I do. And Willie——

[Another solo of BILL's is obtruding.]

Get away from the piano, Willie—and Mr. Sterrett. Now, Mr. Van Dyck——

VAN DYCK.

Well, if you insist.

[VAN DYCK seats himself and starts to play. The selection is the Chopin Prelude, Op. 28 No. 4.]

DULCY.

[Seated.]

What was that little thing you played at Mrs. Kennedy's this afternoon?

[She listens. SMITH and FORBES are discussing jewelry in low tones.]

No—that wasn't it. It's lovely, though. Carries me right away.

[SMITH and FORBES become audible.]

Quiet everybody—quiet!

[After a look at her they lower their tones, but not enough to satisfy DULCY.]

DULCY

Ssh! (*She rattles some noisy bracelets.*)

[FORBES turns and looks at her. DULCY giggles at him.]

Oh, Mr. Forbes! I thought it was my husband.

[DULCY's wandering eyes light upon a box of candy, the wrapping still on it. She makes a weak attempt to turn her eyes away from it and then picks it up and tears off its paper noisily, whispering across to MRS. FORBES.]

Candy that Mr. Leach brought! Yes—wasn't it nice of him?

[*She removes cover and ribbon, opens box and offers some to MRS. FORBES and STERRETT in hoarse whisper.*]

Take some!

[*They signal refusal.*]

[*She reaches it towards FORBES.*]

Want some candy, Mr. Forbes?

[FORBES looks around, but does not understand.]

[DULCY creeps across to him.]

Some candy? Sherry's. Delicious! Molasses!

[*She is heavily sibilant.*]

[FORBES, unable to hear, leans toward her. She reaches the box further toward him. After seeing the candy he refuses.]

FORBES.

No, no, thank you.

[*Returns to his chair. GORDON coughs and is hushed. DULCY takes a piece of candy from the box and tastes it; does not like*



DULCY (WHILE THE MUSIC PLAYS): "SHERRY'S I DELICIOUS I MOLASSES I"—(Act 2)

DULCY

it, looks about to make sure no one is observing—replaces it. BILL rises, comes down and selects two pieces.]

DULCY.

Ssh!

BILL.

(*Whispering.*) What?

DULCY.

Ssh!

[The music suddenly stops. DULCY drops candy and applauds.]

BILL.

Ssh!

[The music begins again.]

DULCY.

[In a whisper to MRS. F.]

I thought he had finished.

[VAN DYCK strikes the remaining chords.

DULCY rises.]

Lovely!!

[Long drawn out.]

MRS. F.

It was adorable!

ANGELA.

I loved it!

DULCY

LEACH.

It was—beautiful. It made me think of
Araby and the moon-soaked desert.

[*He loses himself in the desert for a second.*]

Did you see “The Virgin of Stamboul”?

BILL.

(*Promptly.*) No.

DULCY

No—I don’t believe I did, either.

LEACH.

That’s too bad. You know, some of *my* new
picture is being laid in the desert, and that would
be wonderful music for it.

DULCY.

[*Getting an inspiration.*]

Oh!

BILL.

What’s the matter?

DULCY.

I have an idea.

[*BILL moves toward the door.*]

Why not have Mr. Leach tell us the story of
his new picture, while Mr. Van Dyck plays the
music for it?

GORDON.

[*Springing up.*]

But—but, Dulcy——

DULCY

DULCY.

It'll be just like a moving-picture theatre!

LEACH.

[*With fake modesty.*]

Oh, but really—I don't think that I should—
of course, it *would* be interesting.

ANGELA.

Oh, please tell it, Vincent!

[*She gives a look to STERRETT.*]

STERRETT.

Yes, do! (*Turns away.*)

MRS. F.

I'd love to hear it, and so would my husband.
(*She throws her husband a look.*)

DULCY.

Well, now you can't refuse.

LEACH.

[*With no thought of refusing.*]

Since you demand it.

DULCY.

Oh, good! Now everybody take their places.
Mr. Van Dyck, you go back to the piano. (*They
all take seats.*) Mr. Leach, you tell him what
kind of music you want.

[*BILL stands motionless and noiseless.*]

Be quiet, Willie. Now, I'll sit here.

DULCY

BILL.

Mr. Leach. (*A pause.*) How many reels is this picture?

LEACH.

There are eight!

[*BILL sinks into his chair.*]

It's an extra-super-feature, not released on the regular programme!

BILL.

How long does each reel take?

LEACH.

Oh, about fifteen minutes.

FORBES.

[*Looks up.*]

Two hours?

BILL.

To tell it?

LEACH.

Oh, no, to show it. I can give you what *we* call an outline in half an hour—well, three-quarters at the most.

BILL.

That's much better—three-quarters. That's fine!

DULCY.

Now keep quiet, Willie, or he won't tell it. What's the name of the picture, Mr. Leach?

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Striking match.*]

We can have a smoke anyhow.

FORBES.

Thanks.

LEACH.

[*With a winning smile.*]

Of course, I must have absolute silence.

[*FORBES looks at him.*]

DULCY.

Of course. Tell us the name of it.

[*SMITH lights his own and, as FORBES is about to turn for his light, LEACH protests amiably.*]

LEACH.

I shall have to concentrate, and if there are any distractions——

DULCY.

[*Hastily.*]

There won't be any—tell us the name of it.

BILL.

Ask him what it's called.

DULCY.

Shut up, Willie!

LEACH.

[*Waiting a moment until everyone is quiet.*]

The name of the picture——

DULCY

DULCY.

(*Lifting an arm, and thus rattling her bracelets.*)
Quiet, everybody!

LEACH.

Is—"Sin."

[*This to the men. FORBES and BILL exchange a look.*]

"Sin."

[*To the women.*]

DULCY.

[*Doing her bit.*]

"Sin."

[*VAN DYCK starts the Rachmaninoff Prelude. LEACH steps up and stops him.*]

LEACH.

Not yet. And when I'm ready, just a soft accompaniment.

[*Starting with enthusiasm.*]

This is really something quite new in films.
I am going to show Sin—throughout the ages.

DULCY.

[*With anticipation.*]

Well!

LEACH.

In the beginning the picture is symbolic. I
open with a quotation from Hawthorne——

[*For the men's benefit.*]

Nathaniel Hawthorne.

DULCY

BILL.

[*Raising his hand.*]

Who's the director and the cameraman?

DULCY.

Willie!

LEACH.

(*Squelching him.*) The director is Frank Heming Stratton.

BILL.

Oh!

[BILL *prepares for as comfortable a nap as possible.*]

LEACH.

It begins—with the setting out—of Noah's Ark.

[LEACH *signals VAN DYCK, who starts "Sailing, Sailing."* LEACH *considers the music for a second, decides it will do, and continues.*]

We see Noah, a man of advanced years. His wife, his sons, the animals—of each of its kind two. We see the Ark setting out upon its journey—we see the waters rise and rise and rise. For forty days it rains.

[VAN DYCK *changes to "Rustle of Spring."*]

Civilization is all but wiped out—it is kept alive—and SIN is kept alive—only in the Ark.

[*At "Sin"* VAN DYCK *changes to "Kiss Me Again."*]

DULCY

DULCY.

[*In hoarse whisper to MRS. F.*]

“Kiss Me Again.”

LEACH.

Then comes a calm——

[*VAN DYCK changes to “Morning Mood” (Grieg).*]

The dove is sent forth—it returns, unable to find a lighting place.

[*Suiting action to the word, FORBES strikes a noisy match and lights his cigar, unmindful of LEACH’S glare.*]

And then a second dove—and *it* returns—and then a third—and it does not return—for somewhere in the great beyond it had found LAND.

[*A quick signal to VAN DYCK.*]

LAND!

[*VAN DYCK goes into “My Country ’Tis of Thee” loudly.*]

[*DULCY automatically rises, ever patriotic. LEACH is about to begin again, looks at her surprised. DULCY giggles her apology, then sits. LEACH continues as the curtain slowly falls.*]

LEACH.

Many years pass—we are now at King Solomon’s Court—his wives are bathing in the fountain——

[*The curtain remains down for a few seconds to indicate the passing of thirty minutes.*]

DULCY

[As the curtain rises, LEACH, somewhat dishevelled is still talking. BILL is asleep in his chair, STERRETT asleep in his chair. SMITH has fallen asleep in a sitting posture as though he had attempted to be a perfect host but failed. FORBES is the one man wide-awake. He is chewing the stump of a cigar viciously, breathing heavily and seems to be wondering how many seconds he can stand it before he commits murder. VAN DYCK, at the piano, looks exhausted, and by this time is contributing only an occasional chord. MRS. FORBES, ANGELA and DULCY are still "eating it up."]

LEACH.

[Talking as the curtain rises.]

Frances rushes to the edge of the cliff, and, looking over, sees an inert lifeless form. The "Weasel" is dead.

[LEACH pantomimes his excuses hurriedly and takes a drink from glass of water on piano.]

[HENRY enters to clear away the coffee cups.]

DULCY.

Not yet, Henry. How many times——

[HENRY exits.]

Yes, Mr. Leach, the Weasel is dead——

LEACH.

[Picking up the story.]

And then——then the Zeppelin and Jack's automobile go into the final stretch neck and

DULCY

neck. On—on they speed! We get another close-up of Jack in the driver's seat! We see his face—tense—and putting into the car everything that he has, he forges—slowly—slowly ahead! Then more and more! The goal is nearer and nearer! Back in New York, Charley is seen leaving the Chinese Restaurant! On the corner he meets Fanny, who throws the money in his face.

[*For emphasis he touches FORBES' arm.*
FORBES jumps.]

Then flash back to Jack—nearer and nearer—
HE WINS.

[*BILL is rudely awakened and springs up.*]

BILL.

What?

LEACH.

[*Explaining.*]

He wins!!

[*BILL returns to his chair and nap with a manner of a man annoyed at being called too early. VAN DYCK strikes a chord.*]

Gradually he stops. The Zeppelin makes a landing. Coralie gets out of the dirigible and rushes to Jack to forgive him. Just as he takes her in his arms, her father arrives with the afternoon paper, which makes everything clear and vindicates Albert. Then the father clasps Jack's hand and apologizes to him for having thought *him* a thief. And to keep the symbolism to the end, just as Jack kisses Coralie there in Chicago, Marc Anthony is shown kissing Cleopatra in

DULCY

Ancient Egypt and George Washington kissing Martha Washington at Mt. Vernon. And so at the end of the Dream Trail we fade into a long shot of Jack and Coralie, once more in their South Sea bungalow, with the faithful old Toota Heva waiting to greet them in the sunset—and fade out.

[VAN DYCK finishes with a loud chord. LEACH is exhausted from his labors. The women rise. LEACH rushes to them, his hands outstretched, anticipating their congratulations. The women take his hands, chattering. VAN DYCK gets up, raising his arms and exercising his fingers. BILL awakes and rises, but finds his foot asleep. He gradually wakes himself up by some shakes and half-exercises, and awakens SMITH, who also has to exercise and stretch his legs and arms. STERRETT likewise awakes. FORBES has risen and holds his back.]

[HENRY enters, clears the cups and saucers, and exits.]

DULCY.

[When the excitement has died down a little.]

Oh, that was the most wonderful picture I ever saw!

[The women echo this.]

I mean heard! Eight marvelous reels!

BILL.

What a picture! My God, what a picture!

[Exit.]

DULCY

FORBES.

[*Through his teeth.*]

And now, Eleanor, they might enjoy hearing one of *your* scenarios. In fact, I'm going upstairs to get one!

MRS. F.

Charlie—you—you're not really going to get one of mine!

FORBES.

So help me God!

[*He starts up; DULCY stops him at the foot of the staircase.*]

DULCY.

Mr. Forbes, wouldn't you like to play a game of billiards?

GORDON.

[*Pleased with DULCY.*]

Ah! Now, that's fine!

FORBES.

Why, yes, I'm very, very fond of billiards!

DULCY.

There, you see, Gordon, darling.

FORBES.

I didn't know you had a billiard table.

DULCY.

Why yes, a wonderful one!

DULCY

GORDON.

[Indicating the door.]

Downstairs.

VAN DYCK.

That sounds interesting. May I look on?

[Exits.]

[GORDON has gone to DULCY and squeezed her hand in appreciation.]

GORDON.

[At door.]

This way, Mr. Forbes.

FORBES.

Good God, why didn't you mention billiards earlier!

[Exeunt SMITH and FORBES.]

DULCY.

[To MRS. F.]

I think it's good for the men to get off by themselves once in a while—they seem to like it. Besides, I wanted to talk to you. Angela dear, why don't you and Mr. Leach go out for a stroll in the moonlight? It's a wonderful night, in the moonlight.

ANGELA.

Yes, let's!

LEACH.

The moonlight! I would adore it!

DULCY

MRS. F.

You'd better put on a wrap, Angela.

ANGELA.

Oh, mother, it isn't cold.

[*Exeunt ANGELA and LEACH.*]

STERRETT.

(*Taking the pretty rough hint.*) I guess I'll watch the billiard game.

[*Exit.*]

[*The two women sit down. DULCY takes box of candy from piano and puts it on a stool between them. They eat and talk.*]

DULCY.

Isn't everything going beautifully?

MRS. F.

Ah—yes.

DULCY.

I think Mr. Forbes is beginning to like Vincent, too.

MRS. F.

Do you?

DULCY.

Don't you? Didn't you see his face—so tense and excited while Mr. Leach was telling his story? Wasn't it nice, with Mr. Van Dyck playing the piano?

MRS. F.

He plays awfully well.

DULCY

DULCY.

Has he said anything to you?

MRS. F.

Who?

DULCY.

Mr. Van Dyck of course. Anybody can see he's attracted to you—he's an awfully nice man, and he's one of *the* Van Dycks of Newport—if you ever want to go there.

MRS. F.

Oh, *is* he?

DULCY.

Yes, I could fix it for you.

[*Enter GORDON and FORBES. They have removed their coats.*]

GORDON.

Dulcy, dear, where did you put those billiard balls?

DULCY.

The what?

[*Enter VAN DYCK.*]

FORBES.

The—billiard balls! It's—a little difficult to play billiards without them.

DULCY.

Oh, the billiard balls!

DULCY

GORDON.

Yes.

DULCY.

[*Rising, going to him.*]

Did you look in the pockets?

GORDON.

[*Sadly.*]

There are no pockets on a billiard table.

FORBES.

[*Willing to let the whole world go hang.*]

What's the difference—what's the difference?

DULCY.

Maybe I did put them some place—now, wait—I wonder if I could have—no—I put the curtains there.

[*A pause.*]

I'll come right away and look for them. I think I know where they are. Gordie, you and Mr. Forbes come with me.

[*VAN DYCK starts to improvise on the piano.*]

That's right, Mr. Van Dyck—you keep Mrs. Forbes company.

[*To FORBES.*]

I'm awfully sorry about those balls. You know, sometimes I think I'd lose my head if it wasn't fastened on.

[*Exit DULCY. FORBES after a look in the direction of MRS. FORBES and VAN DYCK, also goes off.*]

DULCY

MRS. F.

We can go along and watch them play, if you like.

VAN DYCK.

[*Still playing.*]

Do you want to?

MRS. F.

Not particularly.

VAN DYCK.

Then let's don't.

MRS. F.

[*Listening to the music.*]

That's pretty.

VAN DYCK.

I would much rather talk to you.

MRS. F.

A clever man can do both.

VAN DYCK.

But I'm not clever.

MRS. F.

You're at least modest.

VAN DYCK.

[*Playing all through this speech, which is considerably broken up.*]

No—I'm not even that. The downright truth is—I'm embarrassed by opportunities.

DULCY

Here I have a moment alone with you—you're perfectly willing to be entertained. If I could play at all well—which I can't—I should dash off something brilliant—now. And if I could talk well, which I can't, I should simply scintillate—for you. But, you see—I'm just mediocre.

[*A pause. He continues to play.*]

Perhaps I wouldn't be quite so annoyed with myself if it weren't for you.

MRS. F.

But you're doing splendidly. You have a most respectful audience.

VAN DYCK.

[*Stopping playing abruptly.*]

Oh, please, not that! You know you're—charming.

MRS. F.

And just what is—a charming woman?

VAN DYCK.

A charming woman? She's the one I never meet until she's married someone else.

MRS. F.

You're incorrigible. Play something more.

VAN DYCK.

Oh, no.

[*He rises and joins her.*]

I don't feel like playing. What do you say to a stroll?

DULCY

MRS. F.

I'd like it. I've not been out since dinner.

VAN DYCK.

It's pleasant here, isn't it?

MRS. F.

Yes, isn't it?

VAN DYCK.

I have a little place like this in the East—in Abyssinia. The moonlight comes down through the trees—have you ever been in Africa?

MRS. F.

No.

[They start out through the windows.]

VAN DYCK.

You should go to Africa. I have some diamond interests——

[They exeunt.]

[HENRY enters, takes a glance around room, and arranges the cushions on the divan. As he is replacing the one on the end his eyes fall upon something in the easy chair. He picks up ANGELA'S necklace, which FORBES had dropped, thinking he was putting it in his pocket. HENRY, in a matter-of-fact way, puts it in his own pocket and exits up the stairs.]

[ANGELA and LEACH enter through windows. ANGELA is considerably excited.]

DULCY

ANGELA.

It *was* cool, wasn't it?

LEACH.

Was it?

ANGELA.

Weren't you?

LEACH.

No—I was—afire—afire with love for you, Angela.

ANGELA.

Why, what are you saying?

LEACH.

Oh, those deep burning eyes! The mystery of your hair! Angela, you're wonderful! I love you! Almost from the first moment I saw you, I've loved you—wanted you—longed for you! Why, I patterned my newest heroine just after you! To be with you is to breathe the perfume of exaltation! Angela!

ANGELA.

[*Breathlessly.*]

Vincent!

LEACH.

I am offering you myself—everything that I am— Oh, it's true that I've knocked about some—

[*Modestly.*]

DULCY

A good many girls have loved me, but I have never loved any but you, dearest.

[He kneels.]

Say that you love me—a little—even though that love is now no greater than the glow of a single firefly in the fading day!

ANGELA.

[Rising.]

Oh, Vincent—my genius!

[LEACH rises.]

LEACH.

[Clasping her in embrace.]

My sweetheart!

[He kisses her and then holds her off, looking at her.]

My wonder girl! Will you marry me?

[ANGELA'S head drops in assent.]

And the day?

[Embracing her again.]

Love cries for its own!

ANGELA.

Whenever you say—Vincent.

LEACH.

[Getting an idea.]

Why not—ah—but you wouldn't!

ANGELA.

What?

DULCY

LEACH.

Why not now—today—tonight?

ANGELA.

Tonight?

LEACH.

Yes—why not—elope!

ANGELA.

[*Pleased.*]

Elope!

[*Sober.*]

Oh, but mother and father——

LEACH.

I am thinking of them. Your father would not understand.

ANGELA.

Don't you think so?

LEACH.

He doesn't know how our hearts cry for each other.

ANGELA.

But he might never——

LEACH.

Darling, since the beginning of Time hearts have been broken because they were not brave. And think how romantic it would be—you and I stealing away in the night—just we two—together.

[*He draws her to him, they embrace again.*]

DULCY

ANGELA.

Oh, Vincent!

LEACH.

Angela, dear!

ANGELA.

And we'd not tell anybody?

[Withdrawing a bit from him.]

Oh Vincent, I'd have to. Mother and—

LEACH.

[Quickly.]

But not your father!

ANGELA.

[Hesitant.]

No, I shan't tell father. But, mother—and Mrs. Smith. We'll need her.

LEACH.

Just think of it, Angela—you and I eloping!

[They embrace again.]

Won't the world be surprised!

[Enter DULCY.]

DULCY.

Oh, excuse me.

[They break—embarrassed.]

I haven't interrupted anything, have I?

[Hoping to God she has.]

LEACH.

Why—no.

DULCY

ANGELA.

[*Speaking simultaneously with LEACH.*]

Why—yes.

DULCY.

Can I guess it?

[ANGELA *nods, too full to speak.*]

Angela, oh, Angela——

[*She goes to her, embracing her.*]

Of, if this isn't the most wonderful thing I've ever heard! It's—it's—it's—it's—wonderful, that's all I can say! I'm so happy I could cry! Good news affects me that way.

[*She turns and takes VINCENT'S hand, which he has been holding out expectantly.*]

Vincent! I may call you Vincent now, mayn't I?

LEACH.

Of course!

ANGELA.

Mrs. Smith—we're going to need your help.

DULCY.

Yes, darling, of course.

ANGELA.

Now, it's a secret, and you must promise that you won't tell anyone.

DULCY.

Why no—I wouldn't tell a soul.

DULCY

ANGELA.

[*After an assenting signal from LEACH.*]

Well—Vincent and I—are going to elope.

DULCY.

E—elope?

ANGELA.

Tonight.

DULCY.

T—t—tonight? You mean—run away and get married?

[*ANGELA nods her head.*]

Why—why—why—why—that's wonderful—

[*She grows incoherent.*]

—that's just marvelous! I never heard of anything like that! It's—it's—why, it's—

ANGELA.

Now, remember,—you're not to tell a soul

DULCY.

Oh no, I wouldn't tell anybody, no— How soon are you going?

ANGELA.

Just as soon as we can—aren't we, Vincent?

LEACH.

Yes! If we can get away.

ANGELA.

We want you to help us.

DULCY

DULCY.

Of course. You—you—you—should tell your mother. She'll be crazy to know about it.

ANGELA.

Oh, yes.

DULCY.

[Indicates windows.]

I guess she must have gone out there. My, I'm so excited I don't know what to do next! I just feel like jumping up and down!

[Enter BILL. DULCY sees him and rushes down to him.]

Willie, what do you think!

[LEACH and ANGELA start to stop her, but she's too fast for them.]

Vincent and Angela are going to elope!

ANGELA.

Oh! And you promised——

LEACH.

Now you've——

DULCY.

Well, it—it just came out before I could help it. But—but Willie won't tell anybody. You won't tell anybody, will you, Willie?

BILL.

(Slowly to ANGELA.) You're going to elope? With Mr. Leach?

DULCY

ANGELA.

[*Not quite meeting his eye.*]

Yes. (BILL looks from ANGELA to DULCY then back.)

BILL

I won't tell a soul.

DULCY.

[*Vindicated.*]

See?

ANGELA.

Thank you.

BILL.

Where are you going to elope to?

ANGELA.

Why—where were we, Vincent?

LEACH.

I hadn't thought about it just yet.

DULCY.

There are lots of places——

BILL.

[*After a glance at DULCY.*]

How about a marriage license?

ANGELA.

Why, I don't know—Vincent?

[*She turns to him.*]

DULCY

LEACH.

[*Weakly.*]

Well, I thought we might find some place——

BILL.

[*To ANGELA.*]

Going to take your father's car?

ANGELA.

[*Who had not thought about it before.*]

Yes!

DULCY.

You could have had mine—but I broke it.

BILL.

[*To DULCY.*]

I suppose this was your idea.

DULCY.

Well, I helped.

BILL.

Yes, I could tell.

[*Again to ANGELA.*]

Well, after you get this license and find a minister——

DULCY.

Willie, you could help them some way couldn't you? You know where to get a license and everything.

LEACH.

Do you?

DULCY

BILL.

[*A pause.*]

Why—yes.

DULCY.

See, that's just why I told him.

BILL.

I live in—Bronxville, and I know the borough clerk. We could go to his house and get a license.

DULCY.

Oh, that would be lovely!

ANGELA.

[*Weakly.*]

Yes.

LEACH.

[*Dubiously.*]

Yes.

BILL.

Yes. Then I could drive you wherever you wanted to go, and bring the car back—that is, if Mr. Leach wants it brought back.

DULCY.

You see! Everything is working out fine! Now I'll tell you what we'll do! We'll—ah—we'll—ah—what do you suggest, Willie?

BILL.

Is everything ready?

DULCY

ANGELA.

We just have to get our bags.

DULCY.

They just have to get their bags. Vincent, now you go out and find Mrs. Forbes and tell her; then we'll all meet in the garage in ten minutes. I'll go up and get Angela's things for her.

[She starts up, then turns to consider.]

Now let me see——

[Enter STERRETT.]

STERRETT.

[Coming forward with attempted carelessness.]

Oh, hello!

DULCY.

[Weakly.]

Hello.

ANGELA.

[Also weakly.]

Hello, Tom.

[An awkward pause. STERRETT sees that there's something in the wind and that he's not part of it.]

DULCY.

(Coming to the rescue.) There's nothing the matter.

STERRETT.

Oh—excuse me!

[Exit.]

DULCY

ANGELA.

You don't think he suspected?

DULCY:

Of course not. I told him there was nothing the matter. Now let's see—Vincent—— You go out and find Mrs. Forbes, and then go to the garage and wait for us there. Now, quick, quick! Go right through the tomatoes!

LEACH.

[With his eye on Bill.]

Yes, but you know, I can drive a car, too, for that matter.

DULCY.

Hurry up! The less speed the more haste, or something!

LEACH.

All right.

[To ANGELA.]

My dream woman!

[Exit through windows.]

DULCY.

Oh—well, now that's settled. I'll go up and get the things, and we'll all meet in the garage in ten minutes!

ANGELA.

I'll go with you!

DULCY.

No, I'll bring everything out to the garage. If anybody sees me they won't suspect. You

DULCY

know, I'm so excited! Now you two hurry right out! Vincent will meet you there! My, it's—it's just like times of old when knights were bold!

[She gallops up the stairs. ANGELA looks uncertainly at BILL, then starts out quickly, then pauses—to face whatever he may have to say. BILL turns and speaks quietly.]

BILL.

All ready for the elopement?

ANGELA.

I think—I think you're just horrid.

BILL.

Speaking to me?

ANGELA.

You know very well I am.

BILL.

But of course you don't mean it. I'm really being very good to you—helping you out in this way.

ANGELA.

Well—well—you don't have to be so happy about it. After all we—we *are* old friends!

BILL.

But that's why I'm glad. You're glad, aren't you?

ANGELA.

That has nothing to do with it!

[A pause.]

DULCY

Of course I am!

[Another pause.]

You're just—just impossible!

BILL.

Angela, you told me once that I would never change. You were right—I never *have* changed.

ANGELA.

[Almost in tears.]

Oh, I don't care whether you have or not! I think you're positively hopeless!

[She flounces out through the French windows. BILL left alone, looks after her a moment, then starts up, but seeing someone come downstairs, he pauses at the window. HENRY comes downstairs. He wears a sack coat and is carrying a derby. He seems hurried and nervous. As he turns to go, BILL touches him on the shoulder. HENRY starts.]

BILL.

Hello, Henry!

HENRY.

[Collecting himself.]

Yes, sir.

BILL.

What seems to be the trouble?

HENRY.

[Nervous.]

Trouble, sir?

DULCY

BILL.

Yes.

HENRY.

Oh, no trouble, sir. Have you the time, sir?

[BILL takes out watch, somewhat absent-mindedly holding it too closely to HENRY—then, realizing this mistake, turns away to consult it.]

BILL.

Sixteen minutes after ten.

HENRY.

Thank you, sir. Excuse me, sir.

[Exit HENRY hurriedly.]

[BILL stands a moment, undecided whether to investigate HENRY, then turns and goes out through windows.]

[Enter GORDON and FORBES.]

GORDON.

I'm—I'm sorry, but Dulcy—my wife—must have had the table moved for some reason, and then didn't get it quite level when it was put back.

FORBES.

Oh, that's all right—that's all right. In fact, it was rather novel—playing billiards up and down hill.

GORDON.

Probably I can have it fixed before you go home, and then——

DULCY

FORBES.

Doesn't matter, I assure you. I—ah—I—
don't care very much for billiards, anyhow.

GORDON.

[Growing desperate.]

Some other time, then. Maybe you'd like to
—to look at some new golf clubs I just got?

FORBES.

What?

*[Enter MRS. FORBES through the windows.
She is in a state of suppressed excitement,
which becomes more suppressed when she
finds her husband present.]*

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, hello, dear!

FORBES.

[Sourly.]

Hello.

MRS. FORBES.

[Fencing.]

Who won the billiard game?

FORBES.

[Violently.]

Mrs. Smith!

MRS. FORBES.

Have you—seen anybody?

FORBES.

Have I *what*?

DULCY

GORDON.

[Anxious to get away.]

Suppose I—go and lay out those golf clubs
awhile, and—then you can come—later.

FORBES.

[Almost viciously.]

Yes—suppose you do.

GORDON.

Yes, yes. All right—all right.

*[He wipes his forehead nervously as he
goes out.]*

MRS. FORBES.

*[Casting apprehensive glances up the stairs
and out the windows.]*

What's the matter, dear?

FORBES.

What's the matter? Why—why—good
Heavens, the—the——

MRS. FORBES.

*[Half fearful that he had learned about the
elopement.]*

Nothing has happened, has it?

FORBES.

Happened? I should say it has!

MRS. FORBES.

[Alarmed.]

What?

DULCY

FORBES.

I go in here to play a game of—

[*Viciously.*]

—billiards. I think finally that I'm going to get ten minutes of pleasure out of this week-end, and—and—what do I find?

MRS. FORBES.

[*Sweetly.*]

Well?

FORBES.

[*Yelling.*]

What's the difference?

[*A pause.*]

You don't give a darn—you just go ahead carrying on with that fellow Van Dyck.

MRS. FORBES

But, sweetheart——

FORBES.

Oh, I saw the way that woman fixed it up for you! And Angela—where's Angela?

MRS. FORBES.

[*Nervously.*]

I don't know, dear.

[DULCY, carrying two suitcases, comes tiptoeing down the stairs. MRS. FORBES sees her and DULCY wigwags to her to be quiet. FORBES is well down stage, with his back to DULCY.]

DULCY

FORBES.

Out gallivanting with that moving picture nincompoop, I suppose. More of that woman's work!

MRS. FORBES.

Mr. Leach—do you mean?

FORBES.

Yes, Mr. Leach I mean!

[DULCY *has reached the windows*; MRS. FORBES *is signalling to her*.]

Just imagine having a fellow like that in the family—telling you—outlines. And the idea of you standing idly by while he and Angela——

[*He sees MRS. FORBES' signals*.]

What the devil's the matter with you?

[DULCY *slips through the windows*.]

MRS. FORBES.

Why, nothing dear.

FORBES.

Then stand still! And listen to me. If I find this Leach person actually making love to Angela, why, I'm—I'm going to raise hell, that's all. It's been nothing but a series of aggravations—annoyances—ever since I came into this house. Eleanor, I can truthfully say that in all my fifty-three years I have never spent an unhappier evening.

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, Charlie!

DULCY

FORBES.

But I am not going to spend another! I am not going to stay here and ride golf and play horse-back!

MRS. FORBES.

What are you going to do?

FORBES.

I am going—home!

MRS. FORBES.

Charlie!

FORBES.

I'm going upstairs and pack! I promised Sterrett I'd drive him in tonight, and I'm not coming back! There's another thing! The way they're treating Sterrett!

[Starting up the stairs.]

Good *night!*

MRS. FORBES.

Charlie—you can't do that!

FORBES.

Maybe I can't, but I'm going to! You can stay here with Van Dyck and watch Angela carrying on with that Leach person if you want to. BUT—mark my words—if anything comes out of this—if Angela and that fool *are* infatuated with each other, and try to do anything

DULCY

silly—I don't ever want to see *you* or *her* again!
That—is all!

[*He storms up the stairs.*]

[MRS. FORBES *looks after him a minute.*
DULCY *enters through windows and romps*
over to MRS. FORBES.]

DULCY.

[*Gleefully.*]

Well, they're gone!

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, I'm scared! Can't you call them back?

DULCY.

Huh? Why, it's lovely!

MRS. FORBES.

No—no! I've got to tell him! If I don't
he'll—he'll never let me come back to him! He
means it—I know him!

DULCY.

Vincent and Angela have eloped and every-
thing's fine!

MRS. FORBES.

Fine? But—but—oh, it was all *your* doing!
That and—Mr. Van Dyck, and—everything!
Charles would never have talked to me like
that if it hadn't been for you.

[*Sobbing.*]

He never talked to me like that before.

DULCY

DULCY.

Why, Mrs. Forbes, dear, you're tired.

MRS. FORBES.

No, I'm not! I'm just mad, that's all—mad at you! It's all your fault! If my husband ever knows that—that I knew they were eloping, and didn't stop it, why, he'll—he'll—oh, I don't know what he'll do!

[She breaks down, sobbing.]

DULCY.

[Wanting to pat her and not quite daring to.]

There, there, dear. Why, he won't do anything. He'll be the first to congratulate——

[Enter GORDON.]

GORDON.

[Coming toward them.]

Good Heavens, what's all this about? What's the matter?

DULCY.

It's nothing at all, darling. Just—just——

[FORBES comes down the stairs. He is wearing a duster and carrying his hat and suitcase.]

GORDON.

Why, Mr. Forbes!

MRS. FORBES.

Charlie!

DULCY

FORBES.

[Still boiling within.]

Mr. Smith—I—I am returning to New York—important business. My—ah—wife and my daughter will remain here, I *believe*. I don't *know* anything about them.

GORDON.

But Mr. Forbes, I don't understand.

FORBES.

So far as our little deal is concerned, I—I haven't made up my mind yet whether to go ahead with it or not.

GORDON.

My dear sir——

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, Charlie—Charlie—I want to tell you something!

[She starts towards him, but DULCY stops her.]

DULCY.

Now, Mr. Forbes, you don't really mean what you are saying. When in anger, you should always count ten.

GORDON.

[Sternly.]

What is this all about?

[Everybody starts to tell him at once and all are talking as VAN DYCK enters through the windows.]

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

I've got it!

[Seats himself at piano.]

I just thought of it!

DULCY.

Ah—ah—huh?

VAN DYCK.

You know, that little thing I couldn't remember. It was a little Sicilian love song—it went like this.

[He launches into a pretty little thing.]

FORBES.

[After a few bars have been played, in great indignation.]

Oh!!

[He stalks out through windows.]

GORDON.

Mr. Forbes—Mr. Forbes!

[He follows him out.]

MRS. FORBES.

Charlie—Charlie!

[She follows out.]

DULCY.

Oh, Mr. Van Dyck!

VAN DYCK.

Do tell me, what's the trouble? Is Mrs. Forbes——

DULCY.

DULCY.

[*Shaking her head.*]

It's—it's Mr. Forbes.

VAN DYCK.

Mr. Forbes?

DULCY.

He just got angry—for no reason at all, and now he's going back home in his car. . . .

[*She remembers the car is gone.*]

He thinks.

VAN DYCK.

Dear me!

DULCY.

But the worst of it is—he's awfully angry at Gordon, and—he won't go ahead with the business thing.

VAN DYCK.

Business thing? Is that the—now, I don't want to seem inquisitive, but is that the jewelry merger I've heard discussed?

DULCY.

Yes. Didn't you know? I'll tell you all about it! Well, Mr. Forbes was getting up one, and he was going to give my Gordie some of it.

[*Her mood changes.*]

I hope it is all off—only 16⅔ per cent.

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Just a minute. As I understand, it was a combination which would have taken in about fifty per cent of the jewelry trade.

DULCY.

[*Approaching tears.*]

Yes, I think so.

VAN DYCK.

And now Mr. Forbes is leaving your husband out of it? Is that right?

DULCY.

Yes.

[VAN DYCK *considers very seriously.*]

Why? Oh, dear, maybe I shouldn't have told you.

[VAN DYCK *in deep thought.*]

Oh, oh, I wish I hadn't told you.

[VAN DYCK *wheels with decision.*]

VAN DYCK.

Mrs. Smith!

DULCY.

Well?

VAN DYCK.

Mrs. Smith, I like your husband very much.

DULCY.

[*Greatly pleased.*]

Oh, do you?

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Would he be willing to get up his own merger, one bigger than Mr. Forbes ever dreamt of?

DULCY.

Why—what do you mean?

VAN DYCK.

Why doesn't he beat Mr. Forbes at his own game?

DULCY.

Why—why—I never thought of that. But Mr. Forbes has all the money—and—and Gordie hasn't any.

VAN DYCK.

That's it exactly! Now, I've always wanted to take a little flier in the jewelry business. Suppose I financed Mr. Smith—suppose he and I set out to beat Mr. Forbes together? How would that be?

DULCY.

[*Incoherent.*]

Be? Be? Why, it would be incredible—unbelievable!

[*Tearfully.*]

You—do you really mean it?

VAN DYCK.

I do. I'll put up my check the moment your husband says the word.

DULCY

DULCY.

[Crying with joy.]

Oh, Mr. Van Dyck, you've—you've made me the proudest woman in all the world! You let me break the news to him, won't you?

VAN DYCK.

Why—of course, if you wish it.

DULCY.

And to think I introduced you to him! Now, what will he think of me!

[Excited voices are heard off.]

VAN DYCK.

It's Mr. Forbes again!

DULCY.

Is it?

VAN DYCK.

[At the door.]

Perhaps I'd better go. My golf things are fearfully rumpled. Will I find your man Henry through here?

DULCY.

[Her mind on other matters.]

He's around somewhere.

[Exit VAN DYCK.]

[DULCY is almost hysterical with happiness. The voices outside become definite.]

MRS. FORBES.

But, Charlie dear, calm down a little, and don't fly off the handle!

DULCY

FORBES.

Handle! Handle, madam! Do you realize what has happened?

[He enters during this speech, wearing coat and hat, and still carrying suit-case. Stops short at sight of DULCY. Then walks down to her with terrible calm.]

Mrs. Smith. *(He pauses.)* Mrs. Smith, upon going to your garage, I first discovered that my car was gone.

DULCY.

Oh, but that's nothing——

[GORDON appears in windows.]

FORBES.

Just a moment, please! My wife thereupon informed me that you had told her that my daughter and Mr. Leach—have eloped!

[He is throwing a terrific emphasis on every word.]

GORDON.

What!

FORBES.

Is—this—true?

DULCY.

[Quaking, but trying to be gay about it.]

Yes—yes! You see——

MRS. FORBES.

It wasn't my fault, Charlie—honestly!

[FORBES silences her with a gesture, his eyes not leaving DULCY.]

DULCY

FORBES.

Mrs. Smith——

[*Turning.*]

and Mr. Smith. I am measuring my words very carefully. Since—my car—is gone—and the last train—is gone, it seems that I shall be compelled to remain in this house—over night.

[*He pauses—his eyes find DULCY.*]

I shall—endeavor not to commit a murder.

GORDON.

My dear Mr. Forbes, I'm sure this can be fixed up in some way.

DULCY.

Yes. Of course it can.

[*The old DULCY for a second.*]

You know, an angry word spoken in haste——

FORBES.

Please!

[*To MR. SMITH.*]

Mr. Smith, in the circumstances I don't see how we can possibly get on in business together. I don't like your methods!

GORDON.

But, Mr. Forbes——

FORBES.

I shall not call the matter off entirely, but any arrangement which we might eventually make

DULCY

would necessarily differ from our tentative discussions as to percentage.

[GORDON *starts to speak.*]

I'm sorry, but that's my decision!

[STERRETT *comes running on through windows.*]

STERRETT.

Mr. Forbes, Mr. Forbes——

[*He comes between FORBES and SMITH.*]

FORBES.

[*Snapping at him*]

Well, what now?

STERRETT.

Your car is not in the garage!

FORBES.

You don't say so!

STERRETT.

Leach and Angela were acting awfully funny. If you ask me, I think they've eloped in it!

FORBES.

I was not aware that I *had* asked you!

STERRETT.

But—how am *I* going to get back to town to-night?

DULCY

FORBES.

You—might—try—skipping!

[STERRETT *tries to pass this off as a laugh, but a look from FORBES squelches him. He arranges an exit for himself.*]

STERRETT.

Ah—well—I'll see if I can find them.

[*Exit.*]

FORBES.

[*To SMITH.*]

I repeat—the percentage would have to be adjusted. And now I wish you good-night!

[*He makes for stairs.*]

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, Charlie, mayn't I come with you?

FORBES.

It is a matter of utter indifference to me *where* you go!

MRS. FORBES.

Oh, but, Charlie, it wasn't my fault—really it wasn't! I didn't know anything about it until after they eloped!

[*MRS. FORBES follows her husband up-stairs.*]

[*When FORBES started to talk business to GORDON DULCY seated herself on the sofa, smiling with the thought of what she knew and they didn't.*]

DULCY

DULCY.

[*Gleefully.*]

Gordie!

GORDON.

[*Turning and looking at her.*]

My God, are you smiling?

DULCY.

I've got the most wonderful news for you!

GORDON.

[*His anger rising.*]

Is it a surprise?

[*A pause.*]

Dulcy—Dulcy, how could you?

DULCY.

How could I what?

GORDON.

You've ruined me—that's all. Ruined me. Dulcy, I'm afraid we don't hit it off very well—you and I. This thing is too big. Say what we may, it's come between us.

DULCY.

Oh, no, it hasn't, darling. Wait till you hear.

GORDON.

Hear? Hear what?

DULCY

DULCY.

[*Rising and approaching him.*]

How would you like—to have Schuyler Van Dyck for a partner?

GORDON.

A—partner?

[*Going mad.*]

More golf?

DULCY.

Business.

GORDON.

Huh?

DULCY.

[*With great excitement.*]

How would you like to go in business with him; and have Taylor and Robbins and Spelvin and all those other people with you, and leave Mr. Forbes out of it? Get up—a—a—bigger merger than Mr. Forbes ever thought about, because—because you'd have all the money you wanted! Mr. Van Dyck said so!

GORDON.

[*Dazed.*]

He—says so?

DULCY.

Yes! Think of that!

GORDON.

Here! Wait a minute! You've—you've been talking to Van Dyck?

DULCY

DULCY.

Yes—just now!

GORDON.

And he said that he'd finance a combination to beat Forbes and his crowd—with me at the head of it?

DULCY.

He's just waiting for you to say the word, darling!

GORDON.

I—I—I—I—I—can't believe it.

DULCY.

[*Caressing him as if to restore his senses.*]
But it's true—it *is*, dear.

GORDON.

Why, it's—it's too good to be true. I—I could be rid of Forbes and put the business in for what it's worth. I—I could——

DULCY.

[*Excited.*]

Yes—oh, Gordon!

GORDON.

I—I can really do big things! Why——
[*FORBES comes downstairs.*]

DULCY

FORBES.

Excuse me.

[DULCY and SMITH break. FORBES is the pathetic sight of a strong man reduced to tears.]

I am sorry—to be compelled to make—another statement. I merely wish to announce—on top of everything else—that my daughter's pearl necklace has disappeared.

DULCY.

Disappeared?

GORDON.

What's that?

FORBES.

In view of the fact that it took place in this house, I thought you might have a sentimental interest. I put it in my pocket not three-quarters of an hour ago, and now——

[Enter VAN DYCK, speaking as he comes in.]

VAN DYCK.

I'm sorry, but I've been all over the house and I can't find Henry any place.

[VAN DYCK senses that he faces a situation of some sort.]

He must have gone out.

[SMITH and DULCY exchange terrible looks. DULCY is the first to recover.]

DULCY.

Henry!

DULCY

GORDON.

Well, I'll be——

FORBES.

What's that? Who's Henry? What's he got to do with it?

VAN DYCK.

I'll look again, but I'm certain he's not here.

[He is about to start out.]

GORDON.

[Stopping him.]

Before you go, Mr. Van Dyck——

[VAN DYCK halts.]

And just a second, Mr. Forbes——

[Stopping FORBES.]

We'll straighten out about the necklace later. Mr. Van Dyck, I understand that you have offered to back me with unlimited capital in an independent jewelry merger?

[DULCY sits on sofa, enjoying the situation.]

FORBES.

WHAT?

GORDON.

Am I correct?

VAN DYCK.

You are! Mrs. Smith has interested me very much in this matter. I'll put up the necessary

DULCY

capital, provided, of course, we can agree on the details.

GORDON

[*Willing to agree to anything.*]

Oh, there'll be no difficulty about that.

[*With dignity.*]

I accept your offer. Mr. Forbes, you said a minute ago that you were not certain whether or not our deal was off. Well, I've decided. It *is* off! I am going to line up with Van Dyck and fight you—fight you till one of us is forced to the wall. But before I do it, I'm going to tell you *why* I'm fighting you! I'm fighting you because you tried to take advantage of me!

FORBES.

Advantage?

GORDON.

Yes, advantage! By offering me less than you knew my business was worth. You knew I was in a hole, and now you're going to get just what you deserve. You're going to get a first rate licking!

DULCY.

Oh, Gordie!

VAN DYCK.

[*Anxious to get away.*]

I—I'll see if I can *find* Henry, but I'm afraid he's gone.

[*Exit VAN DYCK.*]

DULCY

FORBES.

All right. Make your fine speeches, but when you talk about fighting, don't forget that I can fight, too. And before you win, you're going to know that you've been in a *real fight!* Remember that!

[*Exit FORBES upstairs.*]

DULCY.

[*Rising and going to GORDON.*]

Gordie, darling, you were wonderful!

[*Embraces him.*]

But the necklace! Do you think Henry——

GORDON.

[*Impatiently.*]

What's the difference whether he did or not? I feel like a new man.

DULCY.

Gordie, you see—I *was* of some use after all.

GORDON.

Use! You were wonderful!

[*Taking her in his arms.*]

The best—the finest little wife in the world.

[*He kisses her.*]

I'm going to beat Forbes, dear—I'm going to succeed—and I'll owe it all to you.

DULCY.

Wasn't it lucky, my finding Mr. Van Dyck?

DULCY

GORDON.

Lucky! It was an inspiration!

DULCY.

And I *am* a real helpmate?

GORDON.

My darling!

[She is again in his arms.]

DULCY.

My Gordie!

[The door bell rings.]

That's the door bell. You'll have to answer it, darling, since Henry isn't here.

GORDON.

One of the neighbors, probably.

[He goes out, leaving door open.]

DULCY.

Oh, Henry!

[Voices are heard off stage.]

PATTERSON.

Is this Mr. Smith's house?

GORDON.

I am Mr. Smith.

PATTERSON.

Can I speak to you a moment on a rather important matter?

DULCY

GORDON.

Won't you step in?

[Enter BLAIR PATTERSON. *A man somewhat under middle-age, well groomed, and with quite an air of authority. He makes a good impression. GORDON follows him on, closing the door.*]

Ah—my wife.

PATTERSON.

[*Coming to DULCY.*]

How do you do, Mrs. Smith? I must apologize for calling at this hour. My name is Patterson—Blair Patterson.

GORDON.

Oh, the attorney!

PATTERSON.

Yes. I was referred to you by Mrs. Kennedy.

DULCY.

Oh, across the street?

PATTERSON.

Ah—yes. She said you had—guests. I just wondered if—among them—there is a Mr.—Morgan? Can you tell me?

GORDON.

Morgan? Why, no.

DULCY.

No.

DULCY

PATTERSON.

Well—is there a Mr. Ford?

GORDON.

No. He's not here either.

PATTERSON.

Mr.—Vanderbilt?

GORDON.

[*Somewhat flattered.*]

Vanderbilt? No.

PATTERSON.

Mr.—Astor?

GORDON.

[*More flattered and somewhat surprised.*]

No. I don't understand.

PATTERSON.

H'm. Well, let me ask you—is one of your guests—tall, good-looking, plays the piano, interested in various—ah—investments——?

DULCY.

[*Proudly.*]

Oh, you mean Schuyler Van Dyck?

PATTERSON.

(*Thoughtfully.*) Schuyler—Van Dyck.

DULCY.

He's here.

DULCY

PATTERSON.

[*Slowly.*]

Yes, I think I do mean Schuyler Van Dyck.
I'm his cousin.

[GORDON and DULCY *exclaim cordially.*]

I—I've come for him.

DULCY.

Come for him?

PATTERSON.

Yes. His real name is Patterson—Horace Patterson. He has an hallucination that he's a millionaire. Goes round forming big companies—. But I assure you he's perfectly harmless.

[*He taps his head significantly as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.]

ACT III

The scene is the same; the time is the following morning. The windows are open and bright morning sunlight is pouring into the room.

The curtain rises on a bare stage and after a second FORBES comes downstairs. He is utterly broken. After throwing a hard look toward the easy chair he sits stiff and upright in the side chair, groaning as he sits. He takes out his cigar case; it is empty; with a growl he rises and looks in humidor on table. There is nothing there. He sits again in the same chair.

STERRETT comes tripping down the stairs.

STERRETT.

[*Blithely.*]

Good morning, Chief!

FORBES.

Got anything to smoke?

STERRETT.

Oh, sure.

[*STERRETT hauls out his cigarette case and opens it.*]

FORBES.

I meant a cigar.

DULCY

STERRETT.

Oh—just a minute.

[He goes for humidior.]

FORBES.

There's none there. None any place. Mrs. Smith probably discovered that I *like* cigars.

STERRETT.

Haven't you any in your room?

FORBES.

Yes, but—ah—I don't want to disturb Mrs. Forbes.

STERRETT.

Oh, I thought you had separate rooms.

FORBES.

[Viciously.]

No. We have the bridal suite.

STERRETT.

Well, Mrs. Forbes must be up by this time. Why don't you go up and——

FORBES.

[Rising.]

Sterrett.

STERRETT.

Yes, Chief.

DULCY

FORBES.

I don't want this to go any further—but I did not sleep in the bridal suite last night. I—took a walk until rather late and when I returned everyone had gone to bed. I didn't know just which rooms were unoccupied, so I slept on a couch in the hall.

STERRETT.

All night?

FORBES.

Now and then. I tiptoed into my room about four o'clock this morning to get this—

[Indicating his business suit.]

Did you ever try to get a suit of clothes out of a closet in the dark, without making any noise?

STERRETT.

Why, no.

FORBES.

[Putting hand to his head.]

Oh, dear.

STERRETT.

You're not ill, Chief?

FORBES.

[Sitting.]

I wouldn't be surprised. It would be too much to expect to get out of this with just a *mental* breakdown, and a celluloid son-in-law.

DULCY

STERRETT.

Nothing new on—the necklace, I suppose?

FORBES.

Oh, yes. It was brought back and I'm wearing it.

STERRETT.

You're what?

FORBES.

Don't you see it?

[STERRETT *makes a weak attempt at a laugh.*]

STERRETT.

Oh, Chief—Chief—you certainly have a sense of humor.

FORBES.

[*Grimly.*]

Yes, and at this time of the morning I'm at my best.

STERRETT.

But—ah—I meant the police.

FORBES.

Huh?

STERRETT.

The police were sent for, weren't they?

FORBES.

Probably. I asked Mrs. Smith *not* to send for them, so I suppose she did.

DULCY

STERRETT.

Well, if I were you, I'd put them right on it.

FORBES.

It may seem impossible to *you*, Sterrett, but there are times when it does *not* pay to advertise. You may recall that my daughter eloped last night.

STERRETT.

It has been a very painful experience for me, Chief.

FORBES.

Well, damn it, you don't think it's been any diversion for me?

STERRETT.

[Hastily.]

Oh, of course not.

[Trying to say something comforting.]

As her father I can keenly appreciate how you're going to suffer.

FORBES.

[Giving him a look.]

Thank you. The reason I don't want the police sent for is that I'm not anxious to have my daughter's elopement become public.

STERRETT.

Oh!

DULCY

FORBES.

I can see the newspaper headlines now. "Daughter of C. Rogers Forbes Elopes With Nut."

[*A pause.*]

I'm going to have it annulled—quietly.

STERRETT.

[*An idea dawning.*]

Maybe they didn't get married!

FORBES.

What?

STERRETT.

Maybe they're not married yet! They couldn't get a license last night! I'll telephone——

FORBES.

They made special arrangements to get a license. Mrs. Smith's brother saw to that. H'm. I rather liked him. I wondered what *he'd* do.

STERRETT.

I never trusted him.

FORBES.

And on top of everything else, the third member of the family gets the Van Dyck money behind him and practically tells me to go to hell.

DULCY

STERRETT.

Certainly is an unlucky house. What time are we going back to town?

[Gordon comes downstairs.]

FORBES.

Just as soon as possible.

GORDON.

[Who hasn't slept either.]

[Meekly.]

Good morning.

STERRETT.

[Right back at him.]

Good morning.

FORBES.

[After hesitating.]

Good morning.

[Looks away.]

GORDON.

Breakfast will be ready in a minute, if the cook is still here.

[GORDON goes out, FORBES not noticing he has left the room.]

[MRS. FORBES comes downstairs.]

FORBES.

Mr. Smith——

[Rises.]

DULCY

After taking into consideration everything that has happened here since my arrival——

[FORBES *turns at this point and notices SMITH is not in the room, but sees MRS. F.*]

MRS. F.

[*To Forbes.*]

Good morning——

[*Finishing it to Sterrett.*]

Mr. Sterrett.

STERRETT.

Good morning, Mrs. Forbes.

MRS. F.

Aren't you—going to speak to me—Charlie?

FORBES.

I'm speaking to no one.

[*Enter SMITH.*]

I will take up our affairs when I get back to the city—if I ever do.

[*He sees SMITH.*]

Oh, Mr. Smith, I was about to say when you walked away a minute ago——

[*DULCY comes downstairs. She is wearing bright sport clothes and is ready for a busy day, but is somewhat subdued.*]

DULCY.

Good morning, everybody. All ready for breakfast? It's a lovely day, isn't it? Has anyone been out? The sun is shining; it's just

DULCY

good to be alive. How do you feel this morning, Mrs. Forbes?

MRS. F.

I'm rather depressed.

DULCY.

Depressed? Well, you mustn't be. I have some wonderful news for you. It's a surprise. Who do you think will be here inside an hour?

FORBES

A couple dozen reporters, I suppose.

DULCY.

[*Almost singing it.*]

A bridal party.

FORBES.

So they *are* married!

DULCY.

Yes. Willie phoned me just now. He said they had trouble getting in touch with the license clerk. I suppose all those people are like policemen—when you want one you never can find one. Anyway, they got him up at last and they were married at midnight.

MRS. F.

[*Romantically.*]

Midnight!

FORBES.

By a Justice of the Peace?

DULCY

DULCY.

No, indeed. By Dr. Carmichael—he's one of the finest ministers in Westchester. Willie knows him awfully well, so I suppose he did it as a special favor. Wasn't it nice of him?

FORBES.

Yes, I appreciate it.

DULCY.

So now you have a genius in the family, Mr. Forbes.

FORBES.

Is he returning the car?

DULCY.

Oh, of course—they'll be here any minute now—the happy couple.

FORBES.

You can give *them*—the bridal suite.

DULCY.

But where will you sleep?

FORBES.

I shall be returning to town as soon as the car arrives.

[To SMITH.]

Mr. Smith, I hope we can have a little talk before I go.

SMITH.

[Meekly.]

Just as you say, Mr. Forbes.

DULCY

DULCY.

Now, now, no business before breakfast. Come along—let's all go in before the grape fruit gets cold.

[She returns to FORBES and takes his arm.]

Mr. Forbes. You come in with me.

FORBES.

[Disengaging himself.]

No, thank you. I'm afraid I must be excused. I'm not very hungry this morning.

[He goes up into windows.]

DULCY.

[Feeling the rebuff.]

Mr. Sterrett, you'll eat some breakfast, won't you?

STERRETT.

[Always willing.]

Why, surely.

[He goes to door.]

MRS. F.

[Stepping up toward her husband.]

There isn't—anything—the matter, is there Charlie?

FORBES.

The matter? Oh, no! I'm just too happy to eat.

[Exit through windows.]

DULCY

DULCY.

Gordon, darling, you must eat some breakfast. Come along.

GORDON.

Dulcy, will you go ahead and leave me alone?

DULCY.

Mrs. Forbes, you'll have some breakfast? (MRS. FORBES *nods*.) Ah! You know, I'm never myself until I've had a cup of coffee in the morning.

[STERRETT *opens the door for them*.]

Of course, we're all depressed now, but maybe after breakfast I'll think of something to cheer us up.

[*Exeunt* MRS. F., DULCY and STERRETT.]

[*Enter, downstairs*, BLAIR PATTERSON.]

PATTERSON.

Good morning, Mr. Smith.

GORDON.

Oh, good morning, Mr. Patterson. *You*—slept well, I trust.

PATTERSON.

Thank you—yes.

[*Earnestly*.]

I'm very sorry to have caused you this trouble.

GORDON.

[*Dejectedly*.]

Oh, that's all right. Ready for breakfast?

DULCY

PATTERSON.

Thank you. I'll take Mr. Patterson home with me just as soon as he can get his things together.

GORDON.

There's no hurry—any more. Have you—told him?

PATTERSON.

No, he hasn't seen me yet. I'll not have any difficulty; it's happened before.

GORDON.

He's—a cousin, I believe you said?

PATTERSON.

A distant cousin—it's really too bad. Brilliant chap—agreeable—obliging——

GORDON.

He certainly is.

PATTERSON.

Quite all right. Lives on Long Island with his mother and sister. Just this one hallucination.

GORDON.

That's all he has?

PATTERSON.

Oh, yes. Now and then he wanders off alone like this, but happily he never causes any real trouble.

DULCY

GORDON.

He doesn't, eh? That's fine.

PATTERSON.

It's a little hard on *me*—being compelled to round him up at intervals. I have to divide my activities as a lawyer with those of a truant officer.

GORDON.

Yes, it must be hard on you.

PATTERSON.

[*Looking about and approaching SMITH.*]

Ah—if I might ask a small favor?

GORDON.

Certainly.

PATTERSON.

I hope none of your guests has learned about my cousin's—weakness?

GORDON.

I don't think so.

[*With a look toward the windows.*]

I hope not.

PATTERSON.

If I may suggest it, it might be better to wait until I've taken him home, in case you wish to explain to anyone. It will save embarrassment.

[*VAN DYCK comes downstairs.*]

GORDON.

I won't say anything.

DULCY

PATTERSON.

Thank you.

VAN DYCK.

[*Noticing SMITH only.*]

Good morning.

GORDON.

Good morning.

[*He indicates PATTERSON.*]

Here's a—friend of yours.

[*Exit SMITH through windows.*]

PATTERSON.

[*Turning.*]

Hello, Horace.

VAN DYCK

Blair! Why, what in the world are you doing here?

PATTERSON.

Oh, just dropped in to say hello.

VAN DYCK.

You can't fool me. You've come to make me leave—that's what you've done.

PATTERSON.

Oh, no—that is—unless you really want to.

VAN DYCK.

[*Aggrieved.*]

It's very—embarrassing.

DULCY

PATTERSON.

[*Annoyed.*]

Well, if it's embarrassing for you, what do you think it is for me? I've a law practice to attend to. I'm getting a little tired of—these—excursions.

VAN DYCK.

Well, I wish you'd leave me alone. At least a half a dozen times during the past few years you've interrupted me in business negotiations that were exceedingly interesting.

PATTERSON.

[*Suddenly suspicious.*]

Have you been—putting through—something—here?

VAN DYCK.

Well, yes—I've been representing my Van Dyck interests. We had all sorts of wonderful things planned. My share alone would have been eight and a half millions. Besides, we were going to play golf.

PATTERSON.

Horace, haven't I told you repeatedly that *I* represent the Van Dyck interests? Now, you must let me handle it. You come back to town with me and we'll talk it over.

VAN DYCK.

[*Protesting.*]

But I can't leave *now*. If I do——

DULCY

PATTERSON.

I'm sorry, Horace, but you know our agreement. Unless you do as I say, I'll never go through with that two hundred million dollar aeroplane company of ours.

VAN DYCK

[Appeased and smiling.]

Oh, all right.

[Enter DULCY. Coming face to face with VAN DYCK, she is very startled and uncertain how to greet him.]

DULCY.

Oh, good morning.

[Timorously.]

How do you—feel this morning?

VAN DYCK.

Very melancholy.

[DULCY sidles away from him.]

I'm afraid I must go back to town.

DULCY.

Ah——!

VAN DYCK.

You don't know how I wish I could stay.

DULCY.

Ah . . . ! Well, that's too bad. Still, it's all for the best. You—you must have some breakfast first.

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Oh, thank you.

DULCY.

(*In a whisper to PATTERSON.*) He can eat breakfast, can't he?

[*Enter SMITH.*]

PATTERSON.

Oh, yes.

VAN DYCK.

I hope we're not the last.

DULCY.

Oh, that's all right. The last shall be first and—everything.

[*Exit VAN DYCK.*]

[*To PATTERSON.*]

I had some soft boiled eggs prepared for him, and some soft milk toast—all very soft, you know. Is that all right?

[*PATTERSON, with a nod, exits. DULCY is about to follow.*]

GORDON.

[*Sharply.*]

Dulcy!

DULCY.

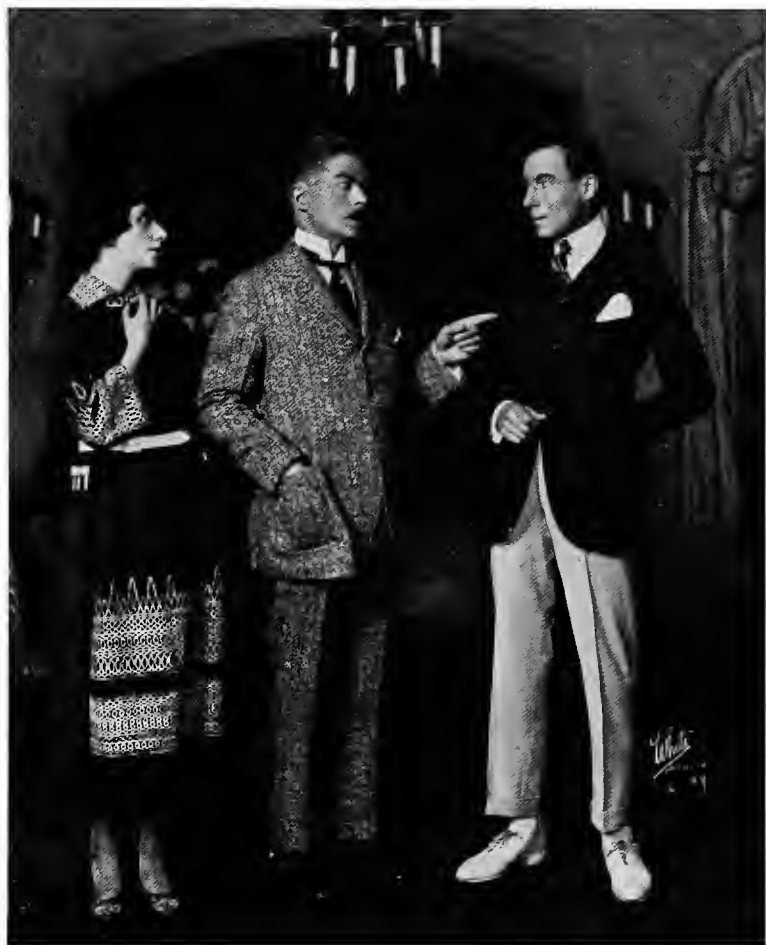
[*Turning nervously.*]

Yes—dear.

GORDON.

[*Very seriously.*]

Dulcy, come here, please.



DULCY: "HE CAN EAT BREAKFAST, CAN'T HE?"—(Act 3)

DULCY

DULCY.

[*Prattling on to cover her nervousness.*]

I—I was just seeing about Mr. Van Dyck's breakfast—Mr.—Mr. Patterson's—I mean. He's—he's all right, really. I mean, of course, he isn't—*exactly* all right, but he's—he's all right for—for what he is—and—I mean—everything *could* be much worse—couldn't it, darling?

[*She finishes rather weakly, going to*
GORDON.]

GORDON.

Dulcy—do you realize—exactly what has happened?

DULCY.

Well, I—I don't know—I think so. Oh, Gordie, I didn't mean to——

GORDON.

[*Simply and kindly.*]

You must listen quietly, dear, until I finish.

DULCY.

[*Momentarily subdued.*]

Yes, darling.

GORDON.

The time has come when—I must speak—
frankly.

[*A pause.*]

Do you know what Mr. Forbes is going to say to me, when he learns who Van Dyck really is?

DULCY

[DULCY shakes her head; she cannot speak at the moment.]

He is going to tell me that my factory and my services are of no use to him. Mr. Forbes thinks—that he has been made a fool of, and—he's right. Our future success—depended entirely on him.

DULCY.

But—but—we haven't really done anything to him. Just because we—we asked for more.

GORDON.

It wasn't—our asking for more.

DULCY.

Oh, you mean the elopement?

[*She considers.*]

He doesn't like pictures.

GORDON.

That was the crowning mistake.

DULCY.

It was me again. It was me as usual. Oh, dear—how will it all end!

[*She sits on sofa.*]

GORDON.

[*Slowly.*]

Forbes will probably force me out of business. Then I'll have to start in all over again without——

[*He glances around room.*]

Without—this.

DULCY

DULCY.

[Forcing herself to say it.]

And without me?

GORDON.

[Dispassionately.]

Dulcy, I love you. I shall always love you. I don't know whether it's because you have the soul of a child, or in spite of the fact that you act like one.

[He turns away.]

I don't know what the future is going to do to us. You mean well, but you just don't stop to think.

DULCY.

I guess, I don't think—I just think I think.

[Rising and speaking bravely.]

I'll let you go, darling—if you want me to. I'm just—all wrong. I'm—a false note. I always wondered how I'd be able to make a man like you care for me—it seems so absurd for a man like you ever to love—a false note. And now—we're finding out—he can't.

GORDON.

[Carried away for a second.]

Dulcy, we can't end everything like this! You're not a false note—you're a melody—a whole tune.

[A pause. He reverts to his previous mood.]

But I don't know what to do.

DULCY

DULCY.

[*Sadly.*]

I don't think I can reform.

GORDON.

No—I suppose not.

DULCY.

[*A bit hopefully.*]

I could make out a kind of budget of things not to do—you know, like the one we did for the household expenses.

GORDON.

I'm afraid—that wouldn't do much good.

DULCY.

[*Realizing that it's old stuff but hopefully trying it anyhow.*]

I could make another promise. One that would take in everything.

GORDON.

Oh, I know you'd try to keep it, but——

DULCY.

[*With tears in her voice.*]

Oh, but I *would* keep this one. Dearest, if you'll let me, I'll promise that I'll never interfere with your business affairs again.

GORDON.

But you practically promised that once, and——

DULCY

DULCY.

I mean in any way whatever. Inviting people to parties, and everything. I'll—I'll revolutionize myself.

GORDON.

[*Turning sharply.*]

Dulcy, I don't want you to change yourself a bit. I love you just as you are.

[*With desperate earnestness.*]

I simply want you to let me handle my own affairs. Promise me that you won't even suggest helping me in business.

DULCY.

[*Hysterically.*]

Allright, I'll promise! And I'll keep it! I will!

GORDON.

[*Embracing her.*]

I'm sure you will!

DULCY.

I will, I will! And furthermore, I'll do everything in my power to repair the damage I've done.

GORDON.

[*Thoroughly frightened.*]

Repair it?

DULCY.

Yes—about Mr. Forbes. I'll go to him and tell him how sorry I am, and see if there isn't something I can do——

[*Forbes comes striding in through windows.*]

DULCY

FORBES.

I beg your pardon, but it is extremely necessary that I get back to town immediately. Can I get a car anywhere in the village?

GORDON.

Oh, but, surely—you're not going before we have our little talk?

FORBES.

I regret that I must.

GORDON.

[Evidently conspiring to keep him there.]

But—I'm afraid you can't get in—this morning. There are no cars to be had out there—so, if you'll just make yourself comfortable——

DULCY.

[Spilling the beans.]

Oh, yes, he can get a car, darling——

[Starting off.]

He can get one right away. I'll phone Kelly. Kelly always has a car.

GORDON.

[Following her.]

But, Dulcy——

FORBES.

Thank you very much, Mrs. Smith.

GORDON.

But, Dulcy—Dulcy——

[Turning back to Forbes hastily.]

DULCY

I'll be back. Dulcy!

[*Exeunt DULCY and GORDON.*]

[*After a pause, FORBES takes a turn, automatically reaching for his cigar case, which he opens and finds empty.*]

[*Enter BLAIR PATTERSON.*]

FORBES.

Why, Mr. Patterson——

PATTERSON.

Oh, it's—ah——

FORBES.

Forbes. C. Roger Forbes.

PATTERSON.

Oh, of course.

[*He shakes his hand.*]

FORBES.

[*Puzzled and suspicious.*]

I—ah—I didn't know you were a friend of Mr. Smith's?

PATTERSON.

Well—ah—no—that is, yes—I——

FORBES.

H'm. Came down—this morning, did you?

PATTERSON.

Ah—yes, yes. Just—got in. Beautiful country.

DULCY

FORBES.

Isn't it?

[*A pause.*]

The Van Dyck interests seem to keep you quite busy.

PATTERSON.

Ah—yes, yes.

FORBES.

I was just—wondering what had brought you, and——

PATTERSON.

[*In a corner.*]

Yes.

FORBES.

H'm.

[*Lightly.*]

Must be—something pretty important—for him to send for *you* at—this hour?

PATTERSON.

Well, ah—just a little matter of business, which he thought—advisable——

[*He finishes with a cough.*]

FORBES.

I see. What I was about to say was—of course, I don't know just what Mr. Van Dyck is thinking of going into, but—ah—if I had a client who was—thinking of *going* into it, why, I'd look into it pretty thoroughly myself. Now I can give you a good deal of facts about——

[*Enter STERRETT and VAN DYCK.*]

DULCY

STERRETT.

[As they enter.]

Well, that's certainly very interesting to me.

VAN DYCK.

Yes, I—I hoped that it would be.

STERRETT.

Well, Mr. Forbes, if you want *me* to handle your advertising after this you'll have to bring it to a different office.

PATTERSON.

[Suddenly suspicious.]

What was that?

STERRETT.

I've just fixed up a little deal with Mr. Van Dyck. I'm to head his new advertising agency!

FORBES.

You don't say so?

PATTERSON.

[With a side glance at VAN DYCK.]

Well!

FORBES.

That's splendid! Anyone who can join hands with Mr. Van Dyck is a very fortunate person.

PATTERSON.

Ah—would you care to finish your packing, Mr. Van Dyck?

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

All right, Blair. In a minute.

PATTERSON.

[Going up to foot of staircase.]

Well, whenever you're ready—Schuyler.

[This informality of address registers strongly with Forbes.]

FORBES.

Ah—now that we've met, Mr. Van Dyck, I hope we can see something of each other in town.

VAN DYCK.

I trust so. As a matter of fact, there are several things I would be interested in going over with you.

FORBES.

[Eagerly.]

That so? What are they?

PATTERSON.

[Warningly.]

Ah—don't forget—Schuyler—your pack-
ing——

VAN DYCK.

[Airily.]

Oh, that's all right, Blair.

FORBES.

You were saying, Mr. Van Dyck——

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

Well, it just occurred to me that we might have interests which—ah——

FORBES.

Yes?

VAN DYCK.

Which we might pool to advantage.

FORBES.

Indeed, yes. Something of that kind has been in my mind for a long time. Of course I hesitated to suggest it to *you*.

PATTERSON.

Don't you think that we'd better be——

STERRETT.

Now, there's something I'd like to ask you, Mr. Van Dyck—and I hope you won't mind my—presuming. Ah—do you—that is, what is your attitude—just at present—on the market? Do you look for further declines, or——

[He pauses.]

VAN DYCK.

[Importantly.]

No, sir.

FORBES.

Ah!

STERRETT.

That's very interesting.

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

As a matter of fact, I look for a sharp rise throughout the list.

FORBES.

Indeed?

STERRETT.

What do you base that on, Mr. Van Dyck?

[Quickly.]

If I may ask?

PATTERSON.

I hardly think you have time to go into that now, Schuyler——

VAN DYCK.

It'll just take a second.

[Pompously.]

The reason that I look for a rising market, Mr. Forbes—is——

FORBES.

Yes?

VAN DYCK.

Is that a war with Spain is now inevitable!

FORBES.

A war with—Spain?

VAN DYCK.

Exactly.

PATTERSON.

Schuyler!

DULCY

STERRETT.

A war between—Spain and—this country?

VAN DYCK.

Oh, no! That's it, exactly. Spain and—Abyssinia!

FORBES.

What's that?

STERRETT.

But I don't——

PATTERSON.

[*Reaching across STERRETT and leading VAN DYCK away.*]

Come, come. I really must get back to town, Mr. Van Dyck. There's a train that goes almost immediately.

[*To VAN DYCK confidentially.*]

It's a matter of two hundred millions.

[*STERRETT and FORBES exchange a glance.*]

Sorry to take Mr. Van Dyck away from you, Mr. Forbes—Mr. Sterrett—but you know how it is. We'll see you presently.

FORBES.

Certainly.

PATTERSON.

Come along, Schuyler.

[*He starts up with VAN DYCK.*]

STERRETT.

[*Following.*]

Mr. Patterson, you don't mind if I go up—along with Mr. Van Dyck, do you?

DULCY

VAN DYCK.

[Turning back to him.]

Come right along, Mr. Sterrett. I haven't finished with you yet.

[Patterson is now on the platform. The other two work their way up the stairs as they speak.]

STERRETT.

No, I didn't think you had. Now, if that April 1st date is O. K. with you——

VAN DYCK.

Yes, and I'll tell you what else you can do for me. I have some copper interests out in Montana——

[Exeunt upstairs VAN DYCK, STERRETT and PATTERSON. FORBES follows up to foot of stairs, looking after them.]

[Enter MRS. FORBES.]

MRS. F.

Oh—Charlie——

FORBES.

Oh, it's you.

MRS. F.

[Approaching a step.]

Charlie, it wasn't my fault—Angela, I mean.

[Forbes listens in stony silence.]

Honestly it wasn't, Charlie.

[She makes up her mind to stretch the truth just a little.]

I didn't know anything about it until after they'd eloped. Really I didn't!

DULCY

FORBES.

Well, I—I've no wish to be unjust, Eleanor.

MRS. F.

Then you'll—forgive me?

FORBES.

You—you're telling me the truth? You didn't know anything about the elopement until——

MRS. F.

Until after Mrs. Smith told me.

FORBES.

That woman!

MRS. F.

Then you will—take me back?

[FORBES *looks at her, pinches her cheeks, then embraces her awkwardly.*]

FORBES.

Eleanor, dear—my little widgie!

MRS. F.

[*Sinking into his embrace.*]

Oh, Charlie, I'm so happy!

FORBES.

My dear, this has been a most unfortunate visit.

MRS. F.

Yes, dearest.

DULCY

FORBES.

But it has done—one thing for me. I didn't know until I saw you with Mr. Van Dyck how much I really cared for you.

MRS. F.

Oh, Charlie—do you honestly? Say it again!

FORBES.

I was actually—jealous.

MRS. F.

[Embracing him.]

Charlie—how wonderful!

I'll never talk to Mr. Van Dyck again, and I'll even give up the Smiths if you insist.

FORBES.

[Quickly.]

Oh, no, no, no. You must stay friendly with the Smiths no matter what happens. Smith's factory equipment couldn't be duplicated right now for any amount. I've got to have it.

MRS. F.

But, Charlie——

FORBES.

Now don't go and tell him.

MRS. F.

Oh, I wouldn't.

FORBES.

I just wanted to be sure.

[Enter DULCY.]

DULCY

DULCY.

Oh, Mr. Forbes, they haven't any automobiles—just now. They said—maybe they'd have one later.

FORBES.

Tomorrow, perhaps?

DULCY.

Oh, Mr. Forbes—I'm sorry——

[She pauses a second.]

Sorry about—the elopement, I mean——

[There is no response from FORBES.]

And everything.

FORBES.

[Annoyed.]

It's quite all right, Mrs. Smith—quite all right.

DULCY.

And I'm sorry about the business deal, too. But it's going to come out all right.

FORBES.

What's that?

DULCY.

I say the business deal between you and Gordie is going to come out all right.

FORBES

Oh, is it?

DULCY

Yes. Gordie will go in with you after all. Because Mr. Van Dyck isn't Mr. Van Dyck at all.

DULCY

MRS. F.

What?

FORBES.

What's that?

DULCY.

No—he has something wrong up here.

[*She taps her head.*]

He only *thinks* he's a millionaire.

MRS. F.

Good heavens!

FORBES.

[*Keeping calm.*]

Oh—so Mr. Van Dyck is—not Mr. Van Dyck!

DULCY.

No.

FORBES.

I see.

DULCY.

[*After a pause.*]

So everything's all right now, isn't it?

FORBES.

Oh, yes. Splendid!

DULCY.

And it's all right between you and Mrs. Forbes, too?

DULCY

[MRS. F. *smilingly puts her arm around him. He smiles at her. DULCY gurgles with joy.*]

Ah—! H'm—! It was sweet of you to forgive her for helping with the elopement.

MRS. F.

[*Drawing back with an involuntary exclamation.*]

Oh!

FORBES.

For—helping with the elopement!

[*To his wife.*]

Then you—*did* know about it? You *helped*!

[*He turns to DULCY who has crept a few steps away, as if to escape.*]

Did she?

[*Enter GORDON. DULCY sees escape is hopeless.*]

DULCY.

I—I——

FORBES.

[*To MRS. F.*]

And you told me you didn't!

MRS. F.

[*Sobbing.*]

Oh, Charlie, Charlie—I didn't very much!
And I was sorry I did, right away.

[*She tries to embrace him; he puts her off.*]

DULCY

FORBES.

I don't care to hear anything about it!

MRS. F.

Oh, but Charlie——

DULCY.

Ah! Ah!

[She crosses to her.]

There! there!

MRS. F.

I feel faint.

DULCY.

She feels faint! Come out into the garden and get some fresh air.

[Leading her up into windows and out.]

Breathe deeply, dear. Ten times. One—two—three——

[They are out of sight and hearing.]

GORDON.

I'm sorry. Sorrier than I can tell you—about all of it.

FORBES.

(After a pause.) Oh, Mr. Smith—I've just been hearing something from Mrs. Smith about Mr. Van Dyck.

GORDON.

[Scared.]

You—have?

FORBES.

Yes.

DULCY

GORDON.

[*He grits his teeth.*]

Well, then of course you know that——

FORBES.

Yes, I know. (*A pause.*) But it won't work, Mr. Smith.

GORDON.

What's that?

FORBES.

I'll admit that Mrs. Smith is a clever woman—a very clever woman.

[*Smith looks at him wonderingly.*]

But it won't work.

[*A pause.*]

Van Dyck *not* Van Dyck. Hah!

[*Smith laughs nervously.*]

I might have believed it—if I hadn't happened to meet Blair Patterson down here. No, Mr. Smith! I know Patterson, and I know that he represents the Van Dyck interests. A man like Patterson doesn't suddenly pop up in Westchester to talk business with a man with hallucinations!

GORDON.

[*Not knowing just what to do.*]

Oh! Well, of course you know——

FORBES.

You bet I do! I saw it all! You began to be sorry you'd told me about the Van Dyck

DULCY

merger, and wanted to throw me off the trail—eh? Well, you can't do it. I know what's in the wind, and I'm going to hold you to your agreement.

GORDON.

Agreement?

FORBES.

Well, it was a verbal agreement. As a gentleman you agreed to come in with me and take 16 two-thirds per cent, and you've got to do it.

GORDON.

[Having difficulty in not betraying himself.]

But, Mr. Forbes——

FORBES.

You've not signed anything with Van Dyck yet and it was just as good as settled with me. Now, if you don't——

[ANGELA bursts through the windows—still in her evening dress.]

[MRS. FORBES and DULCY follow her on.]

ANGELA.

Father!

DULCY.

Well, here she is!

FORBES.

Angela!

MRS. F.

[Quaveringly, her hands on Angela's arms.]

Angela, oh Angela!

DULCY

ANGELA.

Oh, mother—father!

DULCY.

[Expectantly, as though awaiting a speech of forgiveness from FORBES.]

Well—?

FORBES.

[As all eyes go towards him—a short pause.]

Are you—married?

ANGELA.

Yes, father.

MRS. F.

Oh, she's married!

[She takes ANGELA into her arms.]

DULCY.

She's married!

FORBES.

Well—where is your husband?

[ANGELA looks up at him, then buries her face in her mother's shoulder.]

Answer me, Angela!

[Enter BILL. He still wears his dinner clothes.]

BILL.

[Quietly.]

Good morning, everybody.

DULCY

GORDON.

[*Casually.*]

Hello, Bill.

DULCY.

[*Carelessly.*]

Oh, hello, Willie.

FORBES.

Where is Leach?

ANGELA.

[*With a half smile.*]

I don't know, father.

FORBES.

Yo...—don't know?

[*To BILL.*]

Well, perhaps you can tell us!

BILL.

[*Shaking his head.*]

I'm sorry.

FORBES.

Didn't you help to arrange this wedding?

BILL.

Why—yes.

FORBES.

Well, don't you know where the groom is?

BILL.

Sure—I'm the groom.

DULCY

FORBES.

[*Staggering.*]

You're—wh—wh—what's that?

DULCY.

Gr-gr-groom—Willie!

GORDON.

What?

MRS. F.

Why—why—Angela——

[*They all come together—there is a burst of excitement. MRS. F. embraces ANGELA again, DULCY embraces WILLIE. FORBES and SMITH exchange looks. Slowly the excitement dies down.*]

DULCY.

Well—well, tell us about it! Good heavens!
Willie! Just think!

ANGELA.

[*Breaking from her mother's embrace.*]

It was just the most romantic thing that ever happened in the world! William—William just kidnapped me, that's all! Oh, William!

[*She goes into his arms. DULCY laughs ecstatically.*]

FORBES.

(*To BILL.*) Are you a—genius?

BILL.

I should say not.

[*They shake hands.*]

DULCY

DULCY.

[*To FORBES.*]

He's a broker! Isn't it wonderful?

MRS. F.

Oh, Charlie!

GORDON.

Well, what about Leach—where is he?

BILL.

I don't know.

DULCY.

Don't know?

BILL.

We started from here together all right last night—but—ah—down the road a piece I suddenly thought my tail-light was out. Mr. Leach was kind enough to get out and see that everything was all right; suddenly the darned thing started. I tossed his suit-case out to him—I don't think you'll ever see him again.

FORBES.

[*After a laugh—slapping BILL's back.*]

You're pretty damn clever.

DULCY

I introduced them!

FORBES.

[*To DULCY.*]

Oh, so this was what you were working for, underneath that Leach business?

DULCY

DULCY.

[Suddenly seeing a chance to claim the credit.]

Yes.

[She meets BILL's eye.]

And no——

[She evades the issue.]

You don't understand women very well,
Mr. Forbes.

[Enter HENRY with the morning papers.]

GORDON.

[Taken off his feet.]

Henry!

HENRY.

[As though it were all part of his duties.]

Good morning, sir.

DULCY.

[To GORDON.]

Aren't you glad he's back?

GORDON.

But—but—what's this mean?

DULCY.

Oh, I forgot to tell you. Henry had to go to town last night——

[She lowers her voice.]

You know—to report to the Probation Officer. Every week.

DULCY

GORDON.

But—but—the necklace?

FORBES.

Yes, the necklace.

DULCY.

Oh, I forgot to tell you that, too. Henry found it last night and took it for safe-keeping. He gave it to me back this morning.

SMITH.

He did?

HENRY.

Yes, sir, I found it lying about, so I thought I'd better take charge of it, with so many people in the house.

[*Exit.*]

DULCY.

[*She goes up between BILL and ANGELA, an arm around each.*]

It's upstairs for you, Angie, dear. Think of Angie being a married woman, and Willie a married man! Now, Mr. Forbes, you know, 16 two thirds per cent isn't very much—for a relation, a brother-in-law.

FORBES.

Well, I wasn't very generous about that deal of ours, or very just. Smith——

GORDON.

Yes, sir.



DULCY: "ANGELA A MARRIED WOMAN! AND WILLIE A MARRIED MAN!"—(Act 3)

DULCY

FORBES.

What do you say to coming in with me for twenty per cent?

DULCY.

Twenty!

FORBES.

(*Anticipating further objections.*) Well, then, twenty-five. .

DULCY.

Twenty-five!

GORDON.

Dulcinea, that satisfies *me!*

DULCY.

Does it? Well, if it satisfies Gordon——

[*She turns to him.*]

I didn't mean to interfere, dear. I never will again. You can rely on me. A burnt child dreads the fire. Once bitten,—

[*Gordon is embracing her and stops her with a kiss, as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.]

Clair de Lune

By

Michael Strange

A powerful drama based on Hugo's *The Man Who Laughs*, which has just proved a brilliant success on the stage, with Ethel and John Barrymore as co-stars. *The N. Y. Sun* says, "It has undeniable charm and it has some clever dialogue." *The Morning Telegraph* speaks of "the poetry of the beautiful lines with which the play is filled."

G. P. Putnam's Sons

New York

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By

Gilda Varesi and Dolly Byrne

12° Five Illustrations

This sparkling comedy reads as well as it acts, and many, many thousands can testify how well that is. *Enter Madame* sings with the spirit of youth and throbs with situations whimsical, laughable, with a happy and proper ending, wherein the wife gets her own way—painlessly. The comedy is in three acts, and the book contains an Introduction by Alexander Woolcott of the *N. Y. Times*, which tells of Miss Varesi and the writing of the play. There is a photogravure frontispiece of Benda's famous drawing, and four photographs from the play.

G. P. Putnam's Sons

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The Whiteheaded Boy

By
Lennox Robinson

With an Introduction by
Ernest Boyd

The Whiteheaded Boy is the cleverest of the comedies produced by the Irish Players in recent years. It was first given at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, and then for a full season in London, where it had phenomenal success. The richness of its humour, the drollery of the situations, and the perfection of play-writing which it exhibits, place it high among modern plays. It represents the best work of the author, who has been proclaimed as another Synge.

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The Wandering Jew

A Drama in Four Phases

By

E. Temple Thurston

Mr. Thurston has struck out on an original line in this powerful representation of the old legend of the Jew who was doomed to wander the earth until Judgment day. The play, which has been enjoying a long run in London, and will be presented in America this fall, is divided into four phases. The scene of the first phase is laid in Jerusalem on the day of the Crucifixion; the second in Syria at the time of the first Crusade; the third, Sicily of the XIIIth Century, and the fourth in Seville during the Inquisition.

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